

A STUDY OF LAND TRANSFERS IN UTTAR PRADESH

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Government of Uttar Pradesh)**

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CHAPTER I

Introduction, Scope and Coverage

The post-independence period in India has witnessed a number of important changes in the agrarian field. It may not be too wide off the mark to suggest that slowly but surely certain major structural changes have taken place which tend to distinguish the character of the contemporary agrarian structure from the one prevailing in the period before independence. As examples one could point to the abolition of zamindari and absentee landlordism in the early fifties and the gradual evolution of commercialisation in agriculture especially since the mid-sixties. To be sure, the process of transforming Indian agriculture from a low-productivity subsistence activity into a high-productivity commercial activity is far from complete. The recent technological advances have not been evenly spread either in terms of regions or in terms of groups and classes within regions. However, the direction of agrarian change in the post-independence period is reasonably clear : gradual commercialisation of agriculture spear-headed by a classes of owner-cultivators⁰¹³.

The evolution of this trend has been influenced by two major developments in the post-independence period. One is the initial round of land reforms legislation in the early

fifties which ~~which~~ abolished the zamindari system and absentee landlordism and brought about tenancy reforms in order to implement the policy of land to the tiller. The other is the technological ^ftransformation of agriculture, generally referred to as the green revolution, which was set in motion in the mid-sixties.

In the early stages of development thinking after independence it was generally felt that progressive land reforms held the key to unlocking the vast productive potential of Indian agriculture. Much of the stagnation in agricultural growth and production during the colonial period was attributed to the land tenures and policy introduced by the British which subjected the actual cultivator to excessive exploitation at the hands of the landlord class working in league with the colonial state. Thus the need to abolish intermediaries between the cultivator and the state, simplify land tenures and implement the policy of land to the tiller became the main slogans of the advocates of land reforms in India during the struggle for national independence and soon after achieving independence. The Congress party, which spearheaded the national liberation movement, ~~the~~ accepted the commitment to land reforms along these lines as part of its economic and political programmes primarily to mobilise the support of the peasantry and the rural masses for the freedom struggle. After independence ^{thus} ~~their~~ commitment

was translated into land reform laws seeking to abolish zamindari and other forms of absentee landlordism and bringing the cultivator into direct relations with the state, passed by most of the state governments. Because of a general consensus on this issue and the alienation of the big landlords from the prevailing nationalist upsurge on account of their support to the British Raj till the very end, these laws were widely welcomed by the people.

Though the intention of the land reform laws passed in India soon after independence was quite progressive and even radical, the actual results were quite different from the stated intentions.¹ Policies of land to the tiller and protection of tenants were not fully realised. Concentration of land ownership continued because, as yet, there was no provision of ceiling on land holdings. The result was that major advantages accrued to the erstwhile landlords (who were allowed to retain land under self-cultivation which was used as a pretext to evict a large number of tenants), and the intermediate classes² consisting of the upper layers of the tenantry. The smaller tenants and other weaker sections of the rural society did not gain much.

This phase of land reforms only helped the rich peasantry (consisting largely of the erstwhile landlord class) to emerge as the dominant group in the rural society. They were not only the major landowning class but also had a superior social

status and controlled the local political institutions (panchayats, cooperatives and the local administration) as well. ^{etc} ~~These~~ power and influence was truly formidable so that when ceilings legislation did come in the sixties they were able to frustrate its proper implementation. After the mid-sixties the rich farmers had an added incentive to hold on to whatever land they already possessed and also gain possession of more land because of the technological advances in agriculture introduced around this time and generally known as the green revolution. The rich farmers employed a number of methods like transfer of land to their relatives and family members, benami transfers etc. to avoid the provisions of ceiling laws. More land was acquired mainly through illegal "land grab". The redistributive intention of ceiling legislation, therefore, remained largely unrealised.

The net result of land reforms in India has been the creation of a strong and powerful class of owner-cultivator^{ors} without involving any major redistribution of land. While zamindaries and absentee landlords may have been abolished, in their place has emerged a class of rich farmers, numerically in a minority in the rural areas but dominant in the economic, social and political spheres, who have been the main beneficiaries of land reforms. Along with the rich farmers, the medium-sized landowners have also derived some benefits from land reforms. This section has been able to use its strategic

position to influence the character of land reforms in India. While it made common cause with the poor tenants and small peasants in favour of abolition of absentee landlordism and implementing the policy of land to the tiller, it generally extended support to the bigger landowners to ^{oppose} any restriction on the size of landholdings.³ The overall trends of agrarian change following land reforms in India have been aptly summed up by P.C. Joshi :

1. Land reform, specially in India, has been characterized at the ideological level by agrarian radicalism, giving rise to great expectations on the part of the rural poor. At the programmatic level, however, land reform has only tended to promote and consolidate the interests of the intermediate class of big peasants and medium landowners.
2. The land reform programme thus has had a dual impact. Benefitting mainly the intermediate classes, it has left unsatisfied the vast expectations of the rural poor. The former have been upgraded and pushed into prominence in the land and power structure. The latter have, in contrast, lost even the limited security which they enjoyed under the old system without yet a tangible gain in any other form.

While land reforms provided the major impulse for agrarian change in India immediately after independence, the emphasis has shifted to technological change since the mid-sixties. Thus one may venture to suggest that the initial enthusiasm for land reforms has lost much of its steam in recent years. During the last decade and a half the new agricultural technology, popularly known as the "green revolution", has made rapid progress in terms of the area covered, but its results have not been any different from that of land

reforms. In fact the "green revolution" has helped those very groups who derived maximum benefits from land reforms to further consolidate their power. "Available empirical evidence" P.C. Joshi points out "tends to suggest that technological forces have not only reinforced but also accelerated the dual tendencies of agrarian change (viz., economic impetus for the big peasants and economic insecurity for small peasants) which followed the introduction of land reforms".⁵

The "green revolution" made investment in land profitable and provided the basis for the transformation of agriculture from a subsistence activity into a commercial one. The new agricultural technology, being capital intensive, also carried an element of risk. The large farmers alone have the capacity to make the necessary capital investment and bear the risk. Further, because of their dominant power and position they also have access to credit institutions like cooperatives and commercial banks. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that they were the first to reap the benefits of the "green revolution". In course of time the new technology was also diffused among the middle peasants. The poorer sections of the peasantry have, on the contrary, remained largely unaffected by technological changes. It may be relevant to reproduce here what Ladejinsky had to say on this issue in 1973.

In theory the new technology is "neutral to scale", which means that it can be applied to any size of farm; and yields are a function only of inputs. In practice this does not often happen, the constraint being mainly lack of resources. For all the expansion of cooperative credit in recent years, its distribution has always been weighted in favour of the well-to-do rather than the weaker sections of the farm community

If there is any segment of the rural population that has clearly lost out in the innovative process, it is the tenants or sharecroppers. This is particularly true in areas where agricultural transformation is a potent force. There, land values have risen sharply and so have rentals - from 50 per cent to as high as 70 per cent of the crop. Besides, unrestricted land control has never been more prized, and security of tenure and other rights in land a tenant might claim have been perceptibly weakened. The owners would like to get rid of tenants and resume the land for self-cultivation, making use of the plentiful supply of hired labour combined with a new array of modern equipment.

This brief analysis of agrarian change in India in the post-independence period, resulting in the emergence of a strong class of owner-cultivators and the growing commercialisation of agriculture, leads to an important implication i.e., the increasing attractiveness of investment in land. Land, being the basic factor of production in agriculture, has come to acquire a new importance for all engaged in it. For the large numbers of subsistence farmers ownership of even a small plot of means the difference between sheer survival, however precarious, and starvation. For the bigger cultivators, on the other hand, the need to hold on to what they already have and even expand their ~~their~~ holdings - either by purchase, lease or even by outright "grabbing" - has become increasingly attractive. In

this way the control of land and the attendant problem of land transfer can become a major source of tension in the rural areas.

The problem of land transfer thus assumes considerable importance, especially in the context of the wider structural transformation of rural society. It is particularly important to analyse the magnitude of land transfer, how it operates, in whose interest and with what consequences for the overall rural economy and society.

II. Scope and Coverage

The present study deals with various aspects of the problem of land sales in selected districts of Uttar Pradesh during the period 1971-1981. The aspects that we have covered include the magnitude of land sales (both in terms of number of transactions and area sold), socio-economic characteristics of buyers and sellers of land, reasons for sale of land and the overall impact of land transfer through sales on rural economy and society. We have particularly tried to examine whether the rich farmers have been able to use the enhanced income, which has become available to them as a result of technological changes in agriculture, for acquiring more land and thereby enlarging their economic base. If this is so there we would find land increasingly being transferred from the marginal and small farmers to their medium and large counterparts.

At the outset we would like to state that our study deals only with the phenomenon of land sales. Land transfers can also take the form of illegal or collusive transfers. However for this very reason it is virtually impossible to get any precise idea of their magnitude. Land sales, on the other hand, are invariably registered and therefore problems of data availability and reliability do not arise. The exclusion of collusive transfers implies that the conclusions we arrive at may not reflect the true magnitude of all land transfers in the state.

The main objectives of our study may be summarised as follows :

- i) To determine the nature and magnitude of land transfers.
- ii) To determine the social and economic characteristics of the sellers and buyers of land.
- iii) To understand the reasons for land sales by the different sections of rural society.
- iv) To evaluate the impact of land sales on the rural society and economy.

The study was conducted in three districts of Uttar Pradesh which were selected purposively to represent important socio-economic and historical characteristics of the major economic regions of the state viz., Eastern, Central and Western. Thus in terms of the history of land tenures the eastern and western regions of Uttar Pradesh have distinct features which

set them apart in major respects. Under the British revenue ~~set~~ settlements eastern U.P. was characterised largely by permanent zamindari settlement while in western U.P. there was a temporary settlement which combined features of ryotwari and zamindari settlements. As a result the impact of recent land reforms legislation has also been different in these two regions. Briefly speaking, it may be asserted that in western U.P. the abolition of zamindari has benefited a large section of the erstwhile tenants who have emerged as independent owner-cultivators whereas in eastern U.P. the erstwhile zamindars and their sub-infeudatories (mainly traders and money lenders) have been the main beneficiaries.⁷

These historical features may have an important bearing on agricultural growth in the post-independence period in the two regions. It has generally been found that agricultural growth has been good i.e., higher than the state average and comparable to that of Punjab and Haryana, in western U.P. and rather poor i.e., much below the state average in the eastern districts of the state.

The districts that we have selected from these two regions are Saharanpur in western U.P. and Azamgarh in eastern U.P. From the Central region of the state we have selected Lakhimpur-Kheri. This district is in a sense unique and cannot be considered to represent the major characteristics of the

central region either in terms of the evolution of land tenures or in socio-economic terms. We have selected the Tarai belt of ^{this} ~~their~~ district mainly because it is a newly-settled area. The settlements here and in the neighbouring Tarai belt of Pilibhit and Naini Tal districts were made in the fifties after clearing the forests and allotting land to persons displaced from Pakistan (mainly Sikhs) and to some people from eastern Uttar Pradesh. Hence, unlike in other parts of the state, the history of settlements in the Tarai region is of very recent origin and for this reason there are only owner-cultivation^{ors}, and the average size of holdings is also much longer than in other parts of the state. Agriculture is a prosperous activity because of the fertile virgin land and the enterprising character of the people who were settled here.

From each of these districts we selected one tehsil for detailed study. The selection was again made purposively after discussions with the district revenue officials. The objective was to select those tehsils where preliminary evidence suggested the largest number of land sales. Data on land sales during the decade of the seventies were collected from the records of the sub-Registrar's offices and classified village and year-wise. From these data ten villages ^h~~ere~~ were maximum land sales had taken place were selected for further study from each of these tehsils.

The districts, tehsils and villages covered by our study are as follows :

<u>Region</u>	<u>District</u>	<u>Tehsil</u>	<u>Villages</u>	
Eastern	Azamgarh	Lalganj	1. Khaniara 2. Gora 3. Diha 4. Bachwal 5. Renda	2. Khursu 3. Jivli 4. Bargahan 5. Bardah 6. Sarai Mohan
Central	Lakhimpur-Kheri	Nighasan	1. Naurangpur 2. Dhakha 3. Puranpurwa 4. Balpur 5. Ghola	2. Semri 3. Jas Nagar 4. Singahi Khurd 5. Bam Nagar 6. Patihan
Western	Saharanpur	Deoband	1. Bharidin-darpur 2. Chiraur 3. Deohand 4. Nanauta 5. Rankhandi	2. Chakwali 3. Chandanakoli 4. Dalhari 5. Jatole 6. Sakhan Kalan

In the final stage of the study we administered a specially designed questionnaire to households which had sold or bought land between 1971 and 1981 in three villages. These villages are Chandanakoli and Chakwali in Saharanpur district and Singahi Khurd in Kheri district. Details about the choice of villages and the information solicited in the household survey are given in Chapter 5.

Notes

1. P.C. Joshi makes a distinction between the ideology and programme of land reforms. He calls the former an "instrument of political exhortation or support mobilisation" and the latter "a blue print for action and implementation" and goes on to comment : "In fact, agrarian ideology in countries like India and Pakistan has been far more radical than the agrarian programme. From the point of view of the emerging class, radicalism of ideology serves upto a point to disguise the limited class aims of its agrarian programme. But this very radicalism on the one hand arouses vastly the expectations of the rural poor. On the other hand, it provokes the threatened vested interests (viz., the big landlords, etc.) to take prompt precautionary and retaliatory measures so as to defeat the objective of the expected reform." See P.C. Joshi "Land Reform and Agrarian Change in India and Pakistan Since 1947", in Ratna Dutta and P.C. Joshi (eds.), Studies in Asian Social Development : No.1 (Delhi : Institute of Economic Growth, 1971), p.26.
2. P.C. Joshi, in fact, considers the intermediate classes to be the main beneficiaries of land reforms and not the landlord class. Ibid. p.34.
3. Ibid. p.20
4. Ibid. p.59.
5. Ibid. p.43. For empirical evidence see especially some of the writings of Wolf Ladejinsky (e.g. "The New Agricultural Strategy and Institutional Factors"; "Punjab Field Trip"; "Bihar Field Trip"; "Field Trip to Eastern Uttar Pradesh" etc all of which are included in Louis J. Walinsky (ed.) The Selected Papers of Wolf Ladejinsky : Agrarian Reforms as an Unfinished Business (New York : Oxford University Press for the World Bank, 1977)); Francine R. Frankel, India's Green Revolution : Economic Gains and Political Costs (Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 1971); and T.J. Byres "The Dialectic of India's Green Revolution", South Asian Review, (Vol.5, No.2, January 1972).
6. Wolf Ladejinsky "The Rural Scene" in Lois J. Walinsky (ed.) op. cit., pp.535-536.
7. This point has been elaborated by Amit Bhaduri, "Class Relations and Commercialisation in Indian Agriculture : A Case Study in Post-Independence Agrarian Reforms of Uttar Pradesh" (Paper presented at the Seminar on Commercialisation of Indian Agriculture, Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum, November 23-25, 1981, mimeo).

CHAPTER II

Land Reforms and Agrarian Change in Uttar Pradesh Since 1947

It has been emphasised earlier that the problem of land transfer, which is the major concern of our study, needs to be understood in the context of the changes that have been taking place in the agrarian structure. Land reforms have been a major influence in shaping the direction and character of agrarian change. In this chapter, therefore, we have provided a brief overview of land reforms in Uttar Pradesh in the period after independence. We have restricted our analysis to two important pieces of land reform legislation viz., Uttar Pradesh Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act, 1950 and Uttar Pradesh Imposition of Ceiling on Land Holdings Act, 1960 and their impact, primarily because they have exercised the most far-reaching influence on the agrarian structure in the state.

I. Abolition of Zamindari

The history of land reforms in Uttar Pradesh in the post-independence period actually begins with the assumption of office by the Second Congress ministry in 1946.¹ In order to gain the support of the peasants and rural masses for the freedom movement, the Congress party pledged its support to a programme of land reforms encompassing the abolition of zamindari, protection of tenants and giving land to the tiller. Therefore,

when the party came to power in the state for a second time in 1946 it took immediate steps to redeem this pledge. This in August 1946 the U.P. Legislative Assembly passed a resolution accepting the principle of zamindari abolition and recommended to the government that a committee be appointed to go into this question and make necessary recommendations regarding the system of land tenure which would replace zamindari, the rights of intermediaries, the principle of compensation and acquisition and the nature of administrative and financial arrangements needed for the purpose. As a result the U.P. Zamindari Abolition Committee came to be appointed and it submitted its report in August 1948. Based on its recommendations the U.P. Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act, 1950 was passed by the State legislature^{U.P.} in January 1951. The Act went into force in July 1952 after the High Court and Supreme Court rejected petitions of the zamindars challenging its constitutional validity.²

The Zamindari Abolition Act brought about a major restructuring of land tenure and relations and laid the foundation for the ~~the~~ emergence of a class of owner-cultivators in the state. It abolished all intermediaries between the cultivators and the state thus bringing the cultivators into direct relation with the state. One of the most significant achievements of this Act was the simplification of land tenures. The zamindari system had been characterised by a plethora of

intermediaries between the cultivators and the state because of the process of sub-infeudation which had taken place over the years, and a large variety of tenures. The result was that the cultivator was subjected to almost unbearable exactions from a number of overlords. The Zamindari Abolition Act replaced the forty different kinds of tenures which had existed in the state till then with just four viz., Bhumidhar, Sirdar, Asami, and Adhivasi. Of these the last was a purely transitional one.

Bhumidhari rights were conferred automatically on the erstwhile intermediaries in respect of their 'Sir' and 'Khudkasht' lands (i.e., land under personal cultivation) and land under groves and plantations.³ Other tenants could acquire bhumidhari rights by paying an amount equal to ten times the annual land revenue. The former were known as statutory bhumidhars and the latter as voluntary ones. Bhumidhars had permanent, heritable and transferable rights to land.

The other tenants were classified as Sirdars⁴ and given permanent, heritable but non-transferable rights to land. They could use the land only for agriculture, horticulture and animal husbandry. Sirdars could also acquire bhumidhari rights by depositing an amount equal to 10 times the annual land revenue.⁵

The non-occupancy tenants of disabled⁶ bhumidhars and Sirdars and of land in which stable rights could not be given

such as tracts of shifting and unstable cultivation, taunava plantations etc., were classified as Asamis.⁷

Finally the large body of cultivators who did not enjoy security of tenure (viz., tenants of 'Sir' to whom hereditary rights did not accrue, sub-tenants, or those recorded as occupants of any land in 1356 Fasli) were given the status of Adhivasis.⁸ They were given security of tenure for five years after which they could become bhumidhars on payment of fifteen times the land revenue of their tenants-in chief.⁹ In 1954 Adhivasis were conferred Sirdari rights.¹⁰

In 1958 another category of tenure holders, Government Lessees was introduced.¹¹ This category included all persons to whom land had been let out by the State government.

An amendment to the Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act in 1977 brought about a slight modification in the kinds of tenures recognised. Sirdari was abolished and all Sirdars became bhumidhars. However, this change was not as far-reaching as it might appear at first glance, because apart from the change in nomenclature there was no material difference in the status of Sirdars. They were now given the status of bhumidhars with non-transferable rights with all the limitations as before, while erstwhile bhumidhars were recognised as bhumidhars with transferable rights to land.¹² The right to transfer land, it should be pointed out, is not absolute

under the Act but subject to one important limitation. Only so much land can be transferred by way of sale or gift to a person which, along with the land held by the transferees family, does not exceed 12.50 acres (5.0536 hectares).¹³

Further a bhumidhar or asami belonging to a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe cannot transfer any land by way of sale, gift, mortgage or lease to a person not belonging to a Scheduled Caste or Tribe without the prior permission of the Collector.¹⁴ This provision, introduced in 1969 in the Act, is obviously designed to prevent the alienation of land from Scheduled Castes and Tribes through forced transfers.

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The Act also provides that bhumidhari rights cannot be acquired on certain kinds of land specified in Section 132 (viz., pasture lands, land covered by water or in bed of rivers and used for casual and occasional cultivation, certain tracts of shifting or unstable cultivation, lands set apart for taungya plantations, grove lands of a Gaon Sabha or local authority or lands held for a public purpose e.g., military camping grounds, railway or canal boundaries, cantonments, etc.). These lands, however, can be let out by the Land Management Committee of the Gaon Sabha to any person as an asami if the land is vacant and is vested in the Land Management Committee.¹⁵ On other lands vested in the Land Management Committee¹⁶ it can admit a person as bhumidhar with non-transferable rights.¹⁷

In admitting a person either as bhumidhar with non-transferable rights or as an asami, the Land Management Committee has to follow the following order of preference :

- a) "landless widow, sons, unmarried daughters or parents residing in the circle of a person who has lost his life in enemy action while in active service in the Armed Forces of the Union;
- b) a person residing in the circle, who has become wholly disabled by enemy action while in active service in the Armed Forces of the Union;
- c) a landless agricultural labourer residing in the circle and belonging to a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe;
- d) any other landless agricultural labourer residing in the circle;
- e) a bhumidhar or asami residing in the circle and holding land less than 1.26 hectares (3.125 acres);
- f) a landless person residing in the circle who is retired, released or discharged from service other than service as an officer in the Armed Forces of the Union;
- g) a landless freedom fighter residing in the circle who has not been granted political pension;
- h) any other landless agricultural labourers belonging to a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe not residing in the Circle but residing in the Nyaya Panchayat Circle referred to in Section 42 of the U.P. Panchayat Raj Act, 1947."16/

It is further provided that the land allotted to any person shall not exceed 1.26 hectares (3.125 acres) including any land hold by him as a bhumidhar or asami (especially in the case of landless agricultural labourers belonging to a Scheduled Caste or Tribe referred to in sub-clause (C) above).

II. Impact of Zamindari Abolition

The most important achievement of the Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act, 1950 was that it did away, at one stroke, with the system of absentee landlordism and the many layers of intermediaries between the cultivators and the state. All lands were vested in the State, the tenures were simplified and the cultivators brought into direct relation with the State. These measures, it was felt, would save the cultivators from the numerous exactions - legal and illegal - of the numerous intermediaries which had been the cause of their poverty and exploitation under the zamindari system. By prohibiting the sub-letting of land, except in certain cases of disability, the Act tried to ensure that tenancy would not again raise its ugly head. The major objectives of the Act were two-fold : (i) to give the actual tillers an interest in the land they cultivated, and (ii) to put an end to the feudal exploitation from ~~the~~ which the cultivators suffered under the old system. These objectives, according to the framers of the Act, would go a long way in creating conditions of agricultural growth and development and improving the living conditions of the vast mass of the rural population.¹⁷

In retrospect, it appears that while the Zamindari Abolition Act achieved the objective of simplifying land tenures and bringing the cultivators into direct relation with the state, its impact on the majority of the rural population, especially the small cultivators and the poorer people,

was not what had been desired. The real beneficiaries of zamindari abolition were, ironically, the old landlords, especially the bigger ones, and the superior tenants - the very people against whom the Act was aimed. In order to understand how this happened one needs to take a closer look at certain provisions of the Act and the manner of its implementation.

The first point that needs to be noted is that under the Act the intermediaries were permitted to retain all unlet 'Sir' and 'Khudkasht' land as well as land under groves, plantations etc. This provision enabled them to acquire bhumidhari rights over large tracts of land. According to one estimate about 71 lakh acres of land was recorded as 'Sir' and 'Khudkasht' in the name of the landlords on the eve of zamindari abolition. Of this 60 lakh acres was unlet and 11 lakh acres were let out. The Zamindari Abolition Act confirmed the zamindars in the possession of their unlet 'Sir' and 'Khudkasht' as bhumidhars.¹⁸

Secondly the landlords were able to acquire bhumidhari rights over their 'Sir' and 'Khudkasht' land automatically without having to pay anything for it, while the tenants could do so only after depositing a sum equal to ^{ten} ~~the~~ times the land revenue. Clearly this imposed a burden on the tenants which many could not bear and from which the landlords were free.

It should, therefore, hardly come as a surprise that in 1956-57, almost five years after the Act came into force, only 31 per cent of the total land was ~~xx~~ under bhumidhari tenure. Of this about 58 per cent was accounted for by the statutory bhumidhars (i.e. erstwhile landlords) and only 42 per cent by voluntary bhumidhars (i.e. erstwhile tenants). By 1973-74 bhumidhari rights had been acquired on 42 per cent of the land.¹⁹

Thirdly, in fixing the new rates of land revenue, the Act was, initially at least, more favourable to the zamindars than the tenants. The erstwhile zamindars who acquired bhumidhari rights over their 'Sir' and 'Khudkast' land in terms of the Act were required to pay land revenue at the old rates applicable on the holding which they retained, while the other bhumidhars had to pay land revenue at half the hereditary rate of rent and the Sirdars at the same rate as the hereditary rate of rent. When Sirdars acquired bhumidhari rights their land revenue was also halved.²⁰ Clearly then the landlords were treated more favourably than the other sections of rural society. It should be pointed out here that this was the situation till 1976 when by an amendment land revenue for all was fixed at twice the hereditary rate applicable to the plots of land in their holdings subject to the condition that it shall not be less than five rupees and more than ten rupees per acre on unirrigated land and not less than ten rupees or more than twenty rupees per acre on irrigated land.²¹

Fourthly, the provisions dealing with payment of compensation and rehabilitation grant also helped the intermediaries in deriving considerable benefits under the Act and in emerging as a powerful class of rich farmers. While the Act abolished zamindari as an institution it was by no means confiscatory in nature. It provided for payment of compensation for the land taken away from the zamindars. The compensation was calculated at eight times ^{the} ~~and~~ net assets and was paid uniformly to all categories of intermediaries.²² This, it may be noted, was a modification of the recommendation of the Zamindari Abolition Committee that compensation be paid at graded rates varying from three times the net assets to the largest landlords to twenty five times to the smallest ones. The provisions of the Act were clearly designed to benefit the bigger landlords and went against the interests of the smaller ones. In addition to compensation zamindars paying land revenue upto Rs.10000 per year were also given a rehabilitation grant on a graded basis varying from one to twenty times the net assets. Thus those paying a land revenue upto twenty five rupees were entitled to receive a rehabilitation grant equal to twenty times their net assets. While those paying a land revenue of more than five thousand and less than ten thousand rupees received an amount equal to their net assets.²³

It is interesting to note that the money for the payment of compensation and rehabilitation grant to the intermediaries ultimately came from the tenants. The reason for this was

that out of the money which the state received from those who acquired bhumidhari rights by depositing ten times the land revenue, 20 per cent was earmarked for covering administrative expenses incurred in zamindari abolition and 80 per cent for payment of compensation and rehabilitation grant to the dispossessed intermediaries. Even if the Sirdars failed to acquire bhumidhari rights the state was in an advantageous financial position. The land revenue of the Sirdars was fixed at the hereditary rate of rent which was much more than what the state had received as land revenue when such estates were vested with the zamindars.²⁴

In this way we find that one of the main objectives of the Act viz., to liberate the peasantry from the burdens of the zamindari system and lay the foundations of agricultural growth and development, was defeated as the peasantry was asked to bear the burden of abolishing the zamindari system and also compensate the zamindars for their losses. This point has been forcefully underlined by Daniel Thorner :

"The purpose of zamindari abolition was to give relief to the peasantry from oppression by the landlord, i.e. the zamindars. All through the years the burden of maintaining these landlords has fallen upon the peasants. Now they are called upon to bear the full cost of removing the burden. If, indeed, the zamindars were parasitic, the question can be asked as to whether they were entitled to any compensation at all.

From the point of view of economic development, the attempt to raise a compensation fund from the tenants would seem particularly ill-conceived. Aside from

questions of social justice the removal of intermediaries is indispensable to increasing the margin within which the small cultivator is able to operate. Under the U.P. Act, however, the great majority of tenants are left in exactly the same position as before in regard to the amount of rent demanded of them. Alternatively, they may obtain the proffered rent reduction by incurring a debt which may take a generation to pay off. In ~~is~~ either case the operating margin is no greater than before. They are in no better position to invest in new implements or undertake other improvements. They have been liberated from the zamindar only to be bound down anew in the strait-jacket of compensation."²⁵ (emphasis ours).

Finally, by its failure to impose any ceilings on landholdings the Zamindari Abolition Act provided another instance of favouring the zamindars at the expense of the tenants. As we have already seen the zamindars were able to acquire bhumidhari rights over 60 lakh acres of land which had constituted their unlet 'Sir' and 'Khudkasht'. This was a clear violation of the principle of 'land to the tiller' which ostensibly had inspired the Act. Legislation to impose ceilings on landholdings came almost a decade later but by then the zamindars had been given sufficient time to consolidate their position as rich farmers.

III. Ceiling on Landholdings

The Uttar Pradesh Imposition of Ceiling on Land Holdings Act, 1960 was passed by the State legislature in 1961 and came into force immediately. It has been amended a number of times since then. The Act prohibited any tenure holder from holding any land in excess of the ceiling area applicable to him. Ceiling was imposed on the family which initially was defined as con-

sisting of husband, wife, dependent mother and father, sons and grandsons (if they do not own land in their own names), daughters-in-laws, unmarried daughters and grand-daughters. By an amendment to the Act in 1973 the definition of a family was changed to include only the tenure holder, wife/husband (except a judicially separated wife or husband), minor sons and minor daughters (other than married daughters).

For the purpose of fixation of ceiling the Act originally classified the land into three classes : good quality, second grade and third grade. Good quality land was defined as one whose hereditary rate of rent was more than Rs.6.00 per acre. Land with a hereditary rate of rent between Rs.4.00 and Rs.6.00 per acre was classed as second grade and land with a hereditary rate of rent less than Rs.4.00 per acre was defined as third grade. The ceiling for different categories of land was fixed as follows : good quality land - 40 acres for a family of five plus 8 acres for each additional member subject to a maximum of 24 extra acres; second grade land - 60 acres for a family of five plus 12 acres for each additional member subject to a maximum of 36 extra acres; and third grade land - 80 acres for a family of five plus 16 acres for each additional member subject to a maximum of 48 extra acres, ~~additional member subject to a maximum of 48 extra acres.~~ Thus the ceiling for a family of eight or more came to 64, 96 and 128 acres for good quality, second grade and third grade land respectively. This level of ceiling was decidedly very high.

The ceiling was reduced substantially in 1973 through an amendment to the Act which also did away with the scheme of classification of land adopted earlier. The new ceiling was fixed at 7.30 hectares (18 acres approx.) of irrigated land for a family of five or less (including land held by all members of the family). In addition a family could hold two hectares of irrigated land for each adult son who did not hold land subject to a maximum of six hectares (15 acres) of additional land. In case an adult son already held land in his name then only so much additional land was permitted which along with the land held by him would not exceed two hectares. Further if the size of the family exceeded five then it could hold two hectares of irrigated land per additional member subject to a maximum of six hectares in addition to the ceiling of 7.30 hectares.²⁶ Thus the maximum limit of ceiling comes to 13.3 hectares (approx. 33 acres) of irrigated land.

In determining the ceiling it has been provided that one hectare of irrigated land would be considered equivalent to :

- i) one-and-a-half hectares of unirrigated land;
- ii) two-and-a-half hectares of grove land or usar land; and
- iii) one-and-a-half hectares of single-crop land or two-and-a-half hectares of any other unirrigated land in certain specified hilly, rocky and drought-prone areas of the state.²⁷

Exemption from ceiling has been provided to land held by the Government - Central or State - or a local authority, government companies and corporations, educational institutions imparting education in agriculture, universities, banks, and the Bhoodan Yagna Committee.²⁸

All land declared surplus under the Act is to be vested in the State government and the Collector is empowered to make settlement on it on its behalf.²⁹ In the original Act there was provision for temporary allotment of the surplus land to the original tenure-holders so that agricultural production would not suffer. In effect this meant that people who possessed land in excess of the ceiling could continue to enjoy its fruits. This provision could be easily misused, especially by the rich and powerful sections of the rural society. In fact this is what happened as brought out by the Mangal Deo Visharad Committee Report. As a result it was repeated by an amendment in 1969 which also provided that any land let out in this way in the past would, on the expiry of the lease, be resumed by the Collector and settled anew in accordance with the provisions laid down in the amending act. The only exception made is that if the land had been temporarily let out to specific categories of people (e.g., ex-servicemen and landless freedom fighters) then the Collector can settle it with them subject to the condition that the land held by such a person along with the surplus land let out to him does not exceed 1.26 hectares (3.125 acres).³⁰

The surplus land now is to be settled as follows :

- i) Fifteen acres of surplus land to be settled with each Gaon Sabha where no land is available for community purposes (e.g. planting trees, growing fodder etc.);
- ii) If less than 15 acres of common land is available in a Gaon Sabha then the area by which it ^{falls} ~~falls~~ short of 15 acres is to be settled with it;
- iii) The remaining surplus land is to be settled in accordance with the order of preference and subject to the conditions specified in Section 198 of the Zamindari Abolition Act, 1950.³¹

IV. Impact of Ceiling Legislation

The implementation of ceilings laws in India has been ~~from~~ far from satisfactory and Uttar Pradesh is no exception in this respect. The larger landowners have been able to evade the provisions of the law by partitioning their holdings among family members and relatives and by taking recourse to 'benami' transfers in collusion with local officials. Consequently there is a wide disparity between the original estimates of surplus land likely to be available after the implementation of the ceiling law and the actual results. ^{Thus} ~~Then~~ in 1960 it was officially estimated that 14 lakh acres of surplus land would be available after the imposition of ceilings in U.P.³² By 1972,

however, only 2.32 lakh acres of land was declared surplus of which 2.01 lakh acres was acquired and 1.10 lakh acres distributed. Even after the lowering of the ceiling in 1973 only 2.30 lakh acres was declared as surplus upto 1980 of which 2.54 lakh acres was taken into possession and 2.23 lakh acres distributed.³³ What is perhaps really interesting is that the estimate of the area likely to be declared surplus has now been scaled down sharply to just 2.80 lakh acres.³⁴ This represents only 1.57 per cent of the area of all landholdings in the State as reported by the Agricultural Census, 1976-77.

Three things stated out clearly from the foregoing analysis. Firstly, there is great discrepancy between the original estimates of surplus land likely to be available even under the 1960 Act which had fixed rather high ceilings and the revised estimates. Obviously the large landowners have been very successful in evading the provisions of the ceiling law. Secondly, almost all the potentially surplus land has already been declared as surplus, 90 per cent of it taken into possession and 80 per cent distributed. Thus, it may be claimed, that the scope for further distribution of surplus land is extremely limited. In fact, if the ceiling law as it stands today is to be fully implemented only 57,000 acres were available for distribution in 1980. Thirdly, the

new estimate of total surplus land is so small in relation to the area of all landholdings in the State that it cannot be expected to have any impact on the concentration of land-ownership in the state by bringing about a more equitable distribution of land which is one of the objectives of the ceiling law.

V. Conclusion

In this brief review of two important land reform laws enacted in Uttar Pradesh in the post-independence period viz., Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act, 1950 and Imposition of Ceiling on Land Holdings Act, 1960, we have tried to argue that though these laws were quite progressive, perhaps even radical, in intent, ⁱⁿ actual fact they did not bring about the promised restructuring of rural society. The agrarian structure continued to be dominated by the landed interests as before. Thus while the Zamindari Abolition Act was successful in doing away with the zamindari system and the special rights and privileges of intermediaries under the system and went a long way in simplifying land tenures and bringing the cultivator ~~with it~~ into direct relations with the State, it was by no means able to destroy the dominance and power of the large landowners over the agrarian structure. In fact by granting numerous concessions it enabled and helped the zamindars to emerge as the new class of rich farmers with their economic, social and political hold over rural society virtually in fact - perhaps

even strengthened because they were now freed from some of the obligations towards their tenants which they might have borne earlier. The tenants got only marginal benefits as most of them were not in a position to buy the security of bhumidhari rights by paying the required sum of money. Even today they only have the status of bhumidhar with non-transferable rights. At the same time they had to bear the burden of paying compensation to the zamindars.

Similarly the ceiling law too was not able to accomplish much. Its provision were easily evaded by the large landowners who partitioned and transferred their holdings among family members, relatives and friends while retaining effective control over them. Even after two decades the land declared as surplus is just a fraction of what was originally estimated. The law on ceilings on landholdings can therefore be described as one of the biggest non-events in recent years.

Perhaps the most telling commentary on the impact of land reform in Uttar Pradesh is provided by data on distribution of land-ownership. An important objective of both the pieces of legislation surveyed has been to prevent concentration and to bring about a more equitable distribution of land ownership. As Table 2.1 shows this has only remained a pious hope.

Table 2.1 : Percentage Distribution of Households
and Area Owned by Size of Holdings :
Uttar Pradesh c1947 to 1971-72

Size Class (Acres)	P Z A		1953-54		1961-62		1971-72	
	% HH	% Area	% HH	% Area	% HH	% Area	% HH	% Area
Less than 1.00	37.80	6.00	39.69	2.37	44.21	1.59	50.21	4.09
1.00 - 4.99	43.40	33.10	38.74	29.46	31.01	18.40	36.01	38.28
5.00 - 9.99	12.70	26.10	14.25	29.08	12.86	20.54	9.45	27.82
10.00-19.99	4.60	18.00	5.53	22.20	7.56	23.63	3.49	19.76
20 & over	1.50	16.80	1.79	16.89	4.36	35.84	0.84	10.05
All Classes	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Note : P Z A refer to the Pre-Zamindari Abolition period (c1947)

HH refers to households

Source : P.D. Shrimali, "Agrarian Change, Agrarian Tensions, Peasants Movements and Organisation in Uttar Pradesh" (Mimeo. 1981).

(Data for the pre-zamindari abolition period is from the report of the U.P. Zamindari Abolition Committee Report and for other years from the NSS).

Data in Table 2.1 do not give any evidence of reduction in the concentration of landownership either as a result of zamindari abolition or of imposition of ceilings on land holdings. In fact the distribution is slightly more skewed in 1953-54 than in the period before zamindari abolition. In 1953-54

there was a larger percentage of households in the lower land-owning classes (0-5 acres) and they owned a smaller percentage of the land than in the earlier period. At the same time the percentage of households and area owned was higher in the larger land-owning classes (5 acres and more) in 1953-54 than earlier. Major gains seem to have been made by the 5-10 and the 10-20 acre categories. At the same time less than 2 per cent of households owned more than 16 per cent of the land before and after the abolition of zamindari.

The data for 1971-72 show that the first round of ceiling legislation brought about some, though slight, change in the pattern of land distribution. The distribution for 1971-72 is somewhat less skewed than the one for 1953-54. The proportion of households in the smallest land-owning class (0-1 acre) went up to 50 per cent in 1971-72 from about 40 per cent in 1953-54. At the same time the percentage of area owned by them also increased to 4 per cent from about 2 per cent. The next higher category (1-5 acres) also registered gains. While the percentage of households in this category declined to 36 per cent from about 39 per cent, its share of land increased to about 38 per cent from about 29 per cent in 1953-54. There was a decline in the share of all higher landowning classes (5 acres and above) both in terms of percentage of households and percentage of area owned. In the over 20 acre category there were less than one per cent of the households and they

owned about 10 per cent of the total land. Thus it appears that compared to 1953-54, there was some redistribution of land in 1971-72 from the larger landowning classes to the smaller ones with major gains accruing to the 1-5 acre category. Yet the distribution of landownership was still very skewed as the bottom 50 per cent owned only 4 per cent of the land and the top 0.8 per cent owned 10 per cent. The rich farmers (which may be defined as the 10 acres and above category) constituted only 4.3 per cent of the households but owned about 30 per cent of the land.

The conclusion thus seems to be inescapable that neither the abolition of zamindari nor the imposition of ceiling on landholdings was successful in bringing about any major redistribution of land in favour of the small owners.

Notes

1. The short-lived first Congress ministry (1937-39) did not have enough time to frame a comprehensive land reform law. However, it was successful in getting the United Provinces Tenancy Act, 1939 passed by the provincial assembly.
2. For details see P.D. Shrimali, "Agrarian Change, Agrarian Tensions, Peasant Movements and Organisations in Uttar Pradesh" (Department of Economics, Lucknow University, mimeo 1981), p.150.
3. U.P. Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act, 1950 (hereafter referred to as ZAA), Section 18.
4. ZAA, Section 19.
5. In 1969 this amount was raised to 20 times the land revenue but again reduced to the original level in 1976.
6. Disabled here means those who could not cultivate the land themselves being : either mentally or physically disabled, widows, minor children of mentally or physically disabled persons, members of the armed forces, serving prison sentences. See ZAA, Section 157.
7. ZAA, Section 21. Taungya plantations are defined in Explanation of this section as "the system of afforestation in which the plantation of trees is, in the earlier stages, done simultaneously with the cultivation of agricultural crops which ceases when the trees so planted begin to form a canopy rendering the cultivation of agricultural crops impossible."
8. ZAA, Section 20.
9. See the Statement of Objects and Reasons vide the United Provinces Gazette, Extraordinary, dated June 10, 1949.
10. Vide U.P. Act XX of 1954 which added Chapter IX A (Sections 240A to 240M) to the U.P. Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act, 1950.
11. ZAA, Section 133A.
12. Ibid., Sections 129, 130 and 131.
13. Ibid., Section 154.

14. Ibid., Section 157A.
15. Ibid., Section 157.
16. Ibid., Section 198.
17. In the words of the Statement of Objects and Reasons (op. cit.) : "It is now widely recognised that without a radical change in the existing land system no coordinated plan of rural reconstruction can be undertaken to ensure agricultural efficiency and increased food production to raise the standard of living of the rural masses and to give opportunities for the development of the peasant's personality. The landlord-tenant system established by the British for reasons of expediency and administrative convenience should, with the dawn of political freedom, give place to a new order which restores to the cultivator the rights and the freedom which were his and to the village community the supremacy which it exercised over all elements of village life."
18. Daniel Thorner, The Agrarian Prospect in India (New Delhi : Allied Publishers, 2nd edition, 1976), p.23.
19. Shrimali, op. cit., p.200.
20. Thorner, op. cit., pp.24-25.
21. ZAA, Section 245 as amended by Section 18 of U.P. Act 35 of 1976.
22. Ibid., Section 54.
23. Ibid., Section 198 and Scheduled I.
24. Thorner, op. cit., p.26.
25. Ibid., pp.26-27.
26. Uttar Pradesh Ceilings on Land Holdings Act, 1960, Section 5, Sub-section 3.
27. Ibid., Section 4.
28. Ibid., Section 5, Sub-section 2.
29. Ibid., Section 26.
30. Ibid., Section 26A.

31. Ibid., Section 27. For Section 198 of ZAA refer to f.n. 16 above.
32. Shrimali, op. cit., p.196. In a recent study Dilip S. Swamy has estimated that 16.85 lakh acres of surplus land can be available in U.P. This estimate ~~is~~ based on the Agricultural Census, 1971-72 and assumes a ceiling of 10 hectares. See Dilip S. Swamy, "Land and Credit Reforms in India", Part One, Social Scientist (Vol.8, No.11, June 1980).
33. Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, (April 1979-March 1980, Second Report), p.55.
34. Ibid.

CHAPTER III

Economic Profile of the Districts Studied

This chapter contains a broad outline of the economy, especially the agricultural economy, of the districts where the study was conducted. By way of introduction we would like to state that the three districts selected for study belong to distinct economic and agro-climatic regions of the state which differ considerably in levels of development. Thus the western region is the most developed region in the state both in terms of agriculture as well as aggregate economic growth while the eastern region is the most backward. The central region is generally close to the state level in terms of performance on major indicators of economic growth and development. This feature therefore is likely to be reflected in the economic profile of the districts we have studied.

To begin with we shall take up first the general level of economic development as reflected in data on per capita net output and the sectoral composition of net output at the district level (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 : Per Capita Net Output and Share of
Major Sectors in Net Output : District
Azamgarh, Lakhimpur Kheri and Saharanpur
and Uttar Pradesh (1978-79)

District	Per Capita Output (Rs.)	(Commodity Producing Sectors : at current prices)	
		Percentage Share in Total Output	
		Agriculture & Allied	Manufacturing (Regd. & Unregd.)
Azamgarh	424.77	87.0	13.0
Lakhimpur-Kheri	713.23	93.4	3.8
Saharanpur	852.44	58.1	41.2
Uttar Pradesh	598.18	79.5	18.0

Source : U.P. Government, Planning Department, Draft Annual Plan, 1983-84.

It will be seen from the table that Saharanpur ranks first among the three districts in terms of per capita output, Kheri second and Azamgarh third. Further the per capita output in both Saharanpur and Kheri is considerably above the State average while in Azamgarh it is decidedly below it. As far as the structure of the economy is concerned we again find that the economy of Saharanpur is most diversified - much more than that of the State - as over 40 per cent of the output comes from manufacturing and only 58 per cent from agriculture. The economy of Lakhimpur-Kheri is least diversified. The share of agriculture in the output is ~~the~~ as high as 93 per cent and

that of manufacturing only about 4 per cent. In Azamgarh on the other hand agriculture accounts for 87 per cent of the output and manufacturing for 13 per cent. These shares, though, are lower than that of the State as a whole. Thus the economies of Kheri and Azamgarh are predominantly agricultural while that of Saharanpur has a strong industrial base.

Even though agriculture provides, relatively, a lower share of the total output in Saharanpur than in the other two districts, it is much more dynamic and productive. This can be seen from the fact that the gross value of agricultural produce per hectare in 1976-77 was Rs.4113 in Saharanpur, Rs.2640 in Azamgarh, Rs.2513 in Kheri, and Rs.2703 in the entire state. If we look at the figure for gross value of agricultural output per capita (rural) we again find that Saharanpur comes out on top with Rs.865 followed by Kheri (Rs.756) and Azamgarh (Rs.386) while the figure for the entire state is Rs.562. The change in the relative position of Azamgarh and Kheri is most likely due to the higher population density in the former district as compared to the latter. In 1979 the density of population per square kilometer in these two districts was 569 and 220 respectively.*

Data on the sectoral shares of output (Table 3.1) show that while Saharanpur is the most industrialised district,

* These data have been taken from the Draft Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85) of Uttar Pradesh.

Azamgarh comes next and Kheri third. The share of manufacturing in these districts is 41.2 per cent, 13 per cent and 3.8 per cent respectively and in U.P. it is 18 per cent. However, when we compare the proportion of workers engaged in manufacturing in these districts we find a slightly different picture especially in relation to Saharanpur and Azamgarh. In Saharanpur in 1981 only 3.23 per cent of the total workforce of about 7.81 lakhs was employed in manufacturing while in Azamgarh the corresponding figure was 8.02 per cent out of a total work force of about 9.44 lakhs. The figure for Kheri was only 1.45 per cent of the total work force of 6.11 lakhs and for the state it was 4.39 per cent out of a work force of 323.03 lakhs. One inference that we can draw from these data is that in Azamgarh a larger proportion of the workforce is engaged in low-productivity manufacturing (e.g. household industry) than in Saharanpur or Kheri. This inference is supported by data on value added per industrial worker in 1976-77. ~~This~~ This came to Rs.21157 in Saharanpur, Rs.4621 in Kheri, Rs.463 in Azamgarh and Rs.9601 in the State. It could thus be claimed that ^{what} ~~which~~ distinguishes Saharanpur from Kheri and Azamgarh in relation to the place of industry in the economic structure is the level of technology.

It may be somewhat more relevant for our purposes to take a closer look at the agricultural sector in these three districts. We begin by analysing the distribution of land-holdings. Relevant data are presented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 : Percentage Distribution of Operational Holdings by Size Class of Holdings : Selected Districts and Uttar Pradesh (1976-77)

Size Class of Holdings (Ha.)	(Percentage)							
	Azamgarh		Kheri		Saharanpur		U.P.	
	Holdings	Area	Holdings	Area	Holdings	Area	Holdings	Area
Less than 0.50	67.98	20.06	40.05	8.88	37.30	5.44	49.74	10.43
0.50 - 0.99	15.26	17.97	23.67	14.36	17.04	7.73	19.63	13.45
1.00 - 1.99	10.13	22.17	21.15	24.84	19.16	16.70	16.39	21.58
2.00 - 4.99	5.60	26.89	12.45	32.01	19.68	38.22	11.36	32.30
5.00 - 9.99	0.89	9.60	2.14	11.98	5.83	23.68	2.37	14.84
10.0 & above	0.14	3.31	0.54	7.93	0.99	8.23	0.51	7.40
All classes	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source : Board of Revenue (U.P.) : Agriculture Census, 1976-77.

Table 3.2 shows that a higher proportion of small holdings in Azamgarh as compared to Kheri, Saharanpur or the State. Over two-thirds of the holdings are less than half-an-hectare in size. The area under such holdings is only 20 per cent of the total. More than 80 per cent are less than one hectare in size with a 38 per cent share in area. About 11 per cent of the holdings fall in the 1-2 hectare category with about 10 per cent share of the area. In this way over 93 per cent of the holdings accounting for 60 per cent of the area fall in the marginal and small category in Azamgarh. As compared

to this, in Kheri about 85 per cent of the holdings and 48 per cent of the area belong to the marginal and small category while in Saharanpur the corresponding figures are 73.5 per cent of the holdings and about 30 per cent of the area. The position in the state as a whole is quite similar to that in Kheri ; small and marginal holdings constitute about 86 per cent of the holdings with about 45 per cent of the area. In Saharanpur and Kheri ^{there} ~~this~~ is a much smaller percentage of holdings in the 0-0.5 hectare category (37 per cent and 40 per cent respectively) than in the state or in Azamgarh.

The distribution of landholdings further shows that the 2-5 and 5-10 hectare categories which we may call the middle category account for about 26 per cent of the holdings and 62 per cent of the area in Saharanpur, 15 per cent of holdings and 44 per cent of the area in Kheri, 6.5 per cent of holdings and 36.5 per cent of area in Azamgarh and 14 per cent of holdings and 47 per cent of area in the entire state. Finally, what may be referred to as the larger holdings i.e. over 10 hectares constitute a very small percentage of the total in all districts ; close to one per cent in Saharanpur, about one-half of one per cent in Kheri and the State and only 0.14 per cent in Azamgarh. The area under such holdings is also highest in Saharanpur (over 3 per cent) followed by Kheri (slightly less than eight per cent) and Azamgarh (only 3 per cent). In the state as a whole the area under large holdings comes to 7 per cent.

It would thus appear that the distribution of operational holdings is most skewed in Azamgarh and least skewed in Kheri with Saharanpur falling somewhat in between. What distinguishes Saharanpur from the other two districts is the predominance of the middle category of holdings (2 to 10 hectares). As we have already seen over one-fourth of the holdings fall in ^{this} the category and account for more than 60 per cent of the area. Similarly the share of the large holdings is also higher. This fact may probably account for the superior agricultural performance of Saharanpur relative to the other two districts and the state as a whole, because the middle and large farmers are likely to be in a position to derive maximum benefits from the new agricultural technology, and the ~~gawar~~ growing commercialisation of agriculture. However, by itself, this need not be a sufficient condition of agricultural growth because much would depend on the availability of infrastructure facilities especially irrigation which is a necessary condition for the adoption and success of the new seed-fertilizer technology. On this count too Saharanpur is in a much more favourable position than the other districts. In 1978-79 net irrigated area as a percentage of net area sown was 64.99 in Saharanpur, 24.19 in Kheri, 56.53 in Azamgarh and 50.86 in the State. The use of fertilizer also is higher in Saharanpur than elsewhere. In 1978-79 per hectare consumption of fertilizer (NPK) was 64.55 kg. in Saharanpur, 45.06 kg. in Azamgarh, 34.48 kg. in Kheri and 45.33 kg. in the State.*

* Data taken from Uttar Pradesh Ke Krishi Ankare, 1980-81.

Table 3.3 : Area, Production and Yield of Some Principal Crops :
Selected Districts and Uttar Pradesh, 1978-79 to 1980-81

		Azamgarh			Kheri			Saharanpur			Uttar Pradesh		
		Area	Prod.	Yield	Area	Prod.	Yield	Area	Prod.	Yield	Area	Prod.	Yield
<u>1. Rice</u>													
1978-79		225804	220829	9.78	153614	164712	10.72	97615	156988	16.08	5143963	5961198	11.59
1979-80		229218	56693	2.47	162132	41721	2.57	116819	128952	11.04	5056627	2557174	5.05
1980-81		232000	193000	8.32	173000	184000	10.64	106000	176000	16.60	5178000	5437000	10.50
<u>2. Wheat</u>													
1978-79		169147	249154	14.73	160494	198081	12.34	196685	337853	17.72	7390486	11457770	15.50
1979-80		191843	237863	12.40	167536	192296	11.48	188465	296856	15.75	7531804	9895160	13.14
1980-81		200456	302771	15.10	178851	255115	14.26	189490	340000	17.94	8009168	13133752	16.40
<u>3. Sugar Cane</u>													
1978-79		40918	1426354	348.59	95605	2644525	276.61	119347	4487361	375.99	1633842	62324209	381.46
1979-80		38987	1193373	306.10	80949	2098518	259.24	98237	4245434	432.16	1372777	51228439	373.17
1980-81		38363	1398786	364.62	79745	2866123	359.41	109043	5727770	525.28	1364632	64242794	470.77

Further indication of the dynamism of agriculture in Saharanpur relative to the other districts can be had from the data on area, production and yield of some principal ~~xxx~~ crops given in Table 3.3. We have given data for only three crops, viz., rice, wheat and sugar cane, as these are the principal crops in the districts studied both in terms of area sown and production. The data pertain to three years, i.e. 1978-79, 1979-80 and 1980-81. It may be pointed out that 1979-80 was a bad agricultural year on account of poor rainfall. Thus the data for 1978-79 and 1980-81 give a fairly good idea of area, production and yield of these principal crops.

It will be seen from the table that wheat and sugarcane production in Saharanpur is much higher than in the other two districts. Rice production, however, is the highest in Azamgarh with Kheri and Saharanpur being close to each other. Perhaps more important than gross production is the yield of different crops. In this respect the performance of Saharanpur is far superior to that of either Azamgarh or Kheri for all the three crops. There is obviously a positive relation between average yields and availability of irrigation because both Saharanpur and Azamgarh have a larger percentage of irrigated area than Kheri and the yields in the former are also much higher than in the latter. The only exception seems to be rice yields in Azamgarh which are lower than those in Kheri.

Another interesting feature which emerges from Table 3.3 is that the poor rainfall in 1979-80 did not affect agricultural production as adversely ^{in Saharanpur} as in the other two districts. While average yields of the principal crops, especially rice and sugar cane, declined in all the three districts the extent of the decline was not as ^{great} ~~great~~ in Saharanpur as in the others. This probably shows greater stability in agricultural production in Saharanpur (and possibly western U.P. generally) owing perhaps to better use of irrigation facilities. This conjecture is supported by the fact that in 1979-80, ^{the} ~~ten~~ percentage of irrigated area under paddy cultivation was 80 in Saharanpur, 16 in Azamgarh, only 11 in Kheri and 30 in the State as a whole.

From this brief account of the economic profile of the districts selected for study certain features emerge quite distinctly. Firstly, and quite obviously, Saharanpur emerges as the most developed of the three districts followed by Kheri and Azamgarh. While the economies of Kheri and Azamgarh are almost totally agriculture-based as agriculture contributes 87 to 93 per cent of the district domestic net output, that of Saharanpur is more diversified. Agriculture contributes 58 per cent of net output and industry 41 per cent. At the same time agricultural production and productivity is much higher in Saharanpur than in the other districts. There appear to

be two main reasons for this. Firstly, there is a lower proportion of small and marginal holdings - both in terms of numbers and area - in Saharanpur than elsewhere and secondly the extent of irrigation is much higher and irrigation facilities are used more intensively than elsewhere. These two factors together appear to have imparted a dynamism and stability to agriculture in Saharanpur. In the other two districts either the availability of irrigation is low (e.g. Kheri) or there is a preponderance of small and marginal holdings (e.g. Azamgarh where, in fact, over two-thirds of the holdings are less than 0.5 hectares). Azamgarh appears to be further handicapped by a very high population density.

CHAPTER IV

Land Sales : Some General Features

In this chapter we have analysed data on land transfers from 30 villages in the three districts of Azamgarh, Kheri and Saharanpur. As we have mentioned earlier we selected 10 villages in each districts where preliminary evidence suggested that the incidence of land sales had been the highest. Data on land sales were collected from the records of the sub-registrars' offices for the period 1971 to 1981. By way of explanation it may be mentioned here that our data pertain only to sales as such and not to mortgages. We have excluded mortgages as we found that in an overwhelming majority of the cases land was mortgaged to institutions like commercial banks, cooperative banks and land development banks etc. primarily as a guarantee for securing loans for land improvement and/or buying agricultural implements.

Tables 4.1 to 4.3 below give an idea of the number of land sales between 1971 and 1981, in the villages from each of the three districts. It will be seen that the maximum number of transactions took place in Saharanpur (3143), followed by Azamgarh (1029) and Kheri (307) during this period. In each individual year too there were far more transactions in the ten villages of Saharanpur district than in the other two districts. Finally it will be seen that in Kheri and Azamgarh there are great fluctuations in the number of transactions from year to year while this is not so in Saharanpur.

Table 4.1 : Number of Salededs of Tehsil, Lalganj
(Distt. Azamgarh) : 1971-81 (Sampled
Villages)

Villages	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	Total
Khaniara	5	3	7	7	10	7	2	10	21	5	9	86
Khursu	3	2	-	5	6	2	6	2	4	8	4	42
Gora	8	1	8	7	11	2	11	11	6	14	16	95
Jivli	2	11	17	16	12	12	13	22	22	24	15	166
Diha	8	3	5	6	-	7	9	7	7	3	6	61
Bargahan	2	1	2	3	6	9	4	12	16	14	16	85
Bachwal	9	10	13	11	12	5	4	7	11	1	8	91
Bardah	16	3	28	26	13	9	17	28	26	19	29	214
Renda	1	3	5	1	2	3	3	7	5	-	6	36
Sara Mohan	11	4	13	28	12	9	11	18	19	19	9	153
Total	65	41	98	110	84	65	80	124	137	107	118	1029

Table 4.2 : Number of Saled deeds of Tehsil Nighasan
(Distt. Kheri) : 1971-81 (Sampled
Villages)

Villages	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	Total
Naurangpur	1	-	2	2	6	1	2	1	7	4	8	34
Semri	4	5	-	6	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	18
Dhakha	15	5	10	15	11	5	-	-	1	-	5	67
Jasnagar	4	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	2	-	1	10
Puranpurwa	6	-	1	15	8	-	-	-	3	-	-	33
Singahi Khurd	8	2	-	19	21	14	-	-	11	12	3	90
Balpur	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Ram Nagar	7	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	4	17
Ghola	-	-	13	24	-	-	-	-	12	1	-	50
Patihan	6	-	-	2	5	-	-	13	-	-	1	27
Total	51	13	26	84	57	20	2	15	37	20	22	347

Table 4.3 : Number of Salededs of Tehsil Deoband
(Distt. Saharanpur) : 1971-81 (Sampled
Villages)

Villages	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	Total
Bharidindar- pur	13	3	3	3	-	3	2	-	-	-	2	29
Chakwali	16	11	37	23	8	10	16	13	17	22	16	189
Chiraun	9	5	9	13	8	5	15	11	3	13	7	98
Chandenakoli	54	53	75	50	28	31	56	55	39	64	57	562
Deoband	106	64	70	78	53	96	94	92	100	105	182	940
Dalhari	8	6	6	15	9	6	9	5	5	13	21	103
Jatole	3	-	13	7	5	-	7	2	-	5	1	43
Nanota	42	44	40	60	29	42	76	92	95	70	59	649
Rankhandi	77	24	20	51	37	44	31	58	66	34	34	476
Sakhan Kalan	6	5	6	3	4	9	6	-	6	5	4	54
Total	334	215	279	303	181	246	312	328	331	331	283	3143

The data in these tables suggest a few interesting questions requiring further examination. For instance one needs to examine the reasons for the relatively higher volume of land sales in Saharanpur and the low volume in Kheri. Further, a full account of the factors influencing land sales has also got to be taken. Available data do not permit us to make this kind of an analysis as we need further details about the buyers and sellers of land, reasons for sale of land and area involved in sales etc. We will therefore examine these issues a little later when such data for a few selected villages collected on the basis of household survey is presented. Some idea of the area involved in sales can, however, be had from Table 4.4. This table is based on a close scrutiny of a sample of 300-400 sale deeds from each group of ten villages in the three districts for the period 1971-1981. The size of the sample thus varies from 11.5 to 100 per cent of the total sales in each group of villages during the period. In only one district, viz., Kheri were we able to cover all the sale deeds in the ten villages between 1971 and 1981 because their number was not too large. The sample of sale deeds in the other two districts was selected randomly while taking care that in every year during which sales took place in a village at least one sale deed was represented in the sample.

Table 4.4 : Number, Area and Value of Land Sales in Selected Villages of Azamgarh, Kheri and Saharanpur Districts (Sample Data): 1971-81

District	No. of Sales	Area Sold (Acres)	Total Price (Rs.)	Average Area/Sale (Acres)	Average Price/Acre (Rs.)
Azamgarh	311	303.52	1419468	0.98	4676.69
Kheri	347	1355.86	3120460	3.91	2301.46
Saharanpur	361	617.43	3349560	1.71	5425.00
Total	1019	2276.81	7889488	2.23	3465.15

It will be seen from Table 4.4 that the area of land sold was lowest in Azamgarh and highest in Kheri. The average area per sale works out to 0.98 acres in the ten villages of Azamgarh, 3.91 acres in Kheri and 1.71 in Saharanpur. The average value of land sold per acre, however, was highest in Saharanpur and lowest in Kheri.

The first point that emerges from these data is that except in Kheri the average area of each sale was not very large. It was about oneacre in Azamgarh, less than 2 acres in Saharanpur and about 4 acres in Kheri. Thus generally the plots of land sold were not too large. In Azamgarh only rarely did we come across cases where more than 2 acres had been sold. In Saharanpur there were more such cases but very few land

sales exceeded 5 acres. In Lakhimpur Kheri, it was quite common to find parcels of land more than ten acres in size figuring in individual sales. (For details see Annexures I - III).

There could be a number of reasons for the variation in the average area per sale in individual districts. For instance, as we have already noted in Chapter 4, there is a predominance of small and marginal holdings in Azamgarh and the pressure on the land is also high. Further the percentage of area under large holdings ^{is} also relatively small in the district. In this situation it is quite understandable that only small plots of land are sold by the people. The pattern of land ownership in Saharanpur is quite different from Azamgarh. The proportion of small and marginal holdings is relatively lower while that of the middle and large categories (over 2 hectares) is larger. Similarly the area under these categories is also higher in Saharanpur than in Azamgarh. Hence the plots of land sold are also larger in size. The distribution of holdings in Kheri is somewhat more even than in the other two districts. Yet we find that the average area of land sold is the highest in Kheri. The explanation for this probably lies in the nature of the area (Nighasan tehsil) in which the ten villages from which data were collected are located. This area lies in the Terai belt bordering Nepal. It was settled after independence when land was given to people uprooted by the partition in Punjab and to some people from eastern U.P. The average size of land-

holdings were is much higher than the rest of the district. In fact we come across a number of cases of people owning 150 to 200 acres of land. Perhaps this may explain why the average area of sales is the highest in Kheri.

The second point to be noted from the data in Table 4.2₄ is the average price per acre of land sold in the different districts. In this case we find that the price ^{highest} highest in Saharanpur (Rs.5425 per acre) followed by Azamgarh (Rs.4677 per acre) and Kheri (Rs.2301 per acre). Variations in the price of land may be due to a number of reasons such as general level of development, productivity of land, extent of irrigation, demand for land and pressure of population on land. From our data it appears that the factors exerting greatest influence on the price of land in the three districts are most likely the extent of irrigation, productivity of land and pressure of population. As already mentioned in Chapter 3, the coverage of irrigation is most extensive in Saharanpur, with Azamgarh coming next and Kheri third. Similarly yields per hectare of major crops also follow the same pattern. Population density and pressure on land, however, is highest in Azamgarh followed by Saharanpur and Kheri. These factors, we feel, also exert an influence on the price of land in the three districts selected for study showing the variations as noted. In particular, it would appear that the relatively high price of land in the Saharanpur sample is mainly due to better productivity of land and higher coverage

of irrigation facilities. In Azamgarh the factors influencing the price of land are probably the high pressure on land and the availability of irrigation. The case of Kheri appears to be a special one because of the newly settled character of the area chosen. Availability of land is not as ^{big} ~~being~~ a problem as in the other two ~~are~~^{as} areas. There is considerable forest area in Nighasan tehsil and people, especially the larger landowners, have been encroaching on forest lands illegally in order to extend cultivation. Further in a majority of cases land has been sold by the sellers from Punjab primarily to their relatives, friends and acquaintances with the result that larger plots of land have been changing hands. Such sales only tend to replace one group of landowners with another who are similar in major respects to the former and do not affect either the overall pattern of land ownership or the rural social structure.

Finally it needs to be mentioned that the total land sold in eleven years in all the three groups of villages is not very large. On an average the area of land sold per village in eleven years works out to 30.4 acres in Azamgarh, 133.6 acres in Kheri and 61.7 acres in Saharanpur or 2.76 acres per village per year in Azamgarh, 12.15 acres per village per year in Kheri and 5.61 acres per village per year in Saharanpur. The year-wise breakup of land sales in these districts given in Annexures I, II & III generally confirms this observation. What this shows is that only a very small part of the land in the rural areas of the

State is changing hands due to sale. This only confirms the well-known fact that the desire to hold on to land, however small the area and whatever its quality and productivity, is indeed very strong among the rural people. There is perhaps a strong economic compulsion behind this behaviour as in the absence of other avenues of livelihood the ownership of even a small plot of land may mean the difference between starvation and subsistence, however precarious.

CHAPTER V

Characteristics of Buyers and Sellers of Land

I. Introduction and Characteristics of Villages

After having reviewed certain general features of land sales like the magnitude of sales, area involved in sales and price of land etc. in the previous chapter we now turn our attention to the characteristics of buyers and sellers of land. In this chapter therefore we have tried to analyse which category of landholders (in terms of landholding size classes) are involved most in sale of land and which category is buying land. Finally reasons for sale of land have also been analysed. The main objective of the analysis in this chapter is to find out whether land has been passing from particular sections of the rural society (e.g. small and marginal farmers, middle farmers, large farmers etc.) to others, what are the reasons for sale of land and what impact land sales have on the rural society and economy.

The analysis is based on primary household survey data from three villages from amongst the 30 villages for which data on land sales were collected for the period 1971 to 1981. Two of these villages viz., Chandanakoli and Chakwali are in Deoband tehsil of Saharanpur district while the third viz., Singhahi Khurd is in Nighasan tehsil of Lakhimpur-Kheri district.

We were not able to collect data from any village in Azamgarh district. However, since the incidence of land sales is rather modest by comparison in Azamgarh we feel that our conclusion would not be affected much by its exclusion.

In selecting the villages we tried to keep the following considerations in view : (i) the number of land sales in them should be among the highest in the sample of ten villages, and (ii) they should contain about 25 per cent of the total land sales in the group of ten selected villages from the district during the period 1971 to 1981. In terms of these criteria Singahi Khurd was the obvious choice in Kheri district. In Saharanpur we had initially selected Deoband but had to give it up because in recent years it has become a major urban centre with a population of 51261 according to the 1981 census. It thus became virtually impossible for us to locate the buyers and sellers of land. We therefore selected the Chand²makoli and Chakwali instead. It will be seen that together these two villages account for 24 per cent of the total land sales in the villages of Saharanpur during 1971-1981, while Singahi Khurd accounts for 26 per cent of the land sales in the ten villages of Kheri district during the same period.

In all these villages our attempt was to contact all households who had either bought or sold land between 1971 and 1981. Their names were available from the records of land sales at the sub-registrars' office. We thus identified 40 households

in Chandanakoli, 14 in Chakwali and 35 in Singahi Khurd who had sold land during this period. It will be seen that the number of land sales during this period was 55 in Chandanakoli, 21 in Chakwali and 90 in Singahi Khurd. The difference between these sets of figures is mainly due to two reasons : (i) many persons who had sold land were not available in the villages as they had either left them or were deceased, and (ii) many households had sold land more than once during this period. These factors have also affected differences in the total area bought and sold in these villages during the eleven year period. The number of buyers of land in these villages was 38 in Chandanakoli, 17 in Chakwali and 55 in Singahi Khurd.

The information collected from the identified households (sellers and buyers) covered aspects like family particulars, land owned, extent of irrigated area, crops grown, details of family income by main sources and in the case of sellers of land the reasons for land sales. In addition we also filled in a village schedule containing basic socio-economic information about the village. The important characteristics of the villages have been summarised below (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1 : Basic Information about Villages Studied

Item	Chandanakoli	Chakwali	Singahi Khurd
1. Total reporting area (acres)	4038	2336	2061
2. Net area sown (acres)	3589	2136	1411
3. No. of households (1981)	850	679	601
4. Population (1981)	7550	3320	2507
5. No. of tractors	23	8	15
6. No. of pumpsets	300	350	150
7. No. of tubewells	50	60	150
8. No. of threshers	450	20	10

It will be seen that in terms of population size, total area and net area sown Chandanakoli is the largest village followed by Chakwali and Singahi Khurd. The use of tractors, pumpsets, tubewells and threshers appear to be almost equally spread in all the three villages. In respect of irrigation facilities, however, the Saharanpur villages (Chandanakoli and Chakwali) are much better placed than the Kheri village (Singahi Khurd). Net irrigated area as a per cent of net area sown ranges between 87 and 97 in the Saharanpur villages while it is only 18 in Singahi Khurd. As we have seen earlier (Chapter 3) the extent of irrigation is much higher in Saharanpur than in Kheri. Thus the selected villages only conform to the pattern of the districts in which they fall in respect of irrigation facilities.

As far as the social structure of the villages is concerned we found that Chandanakoli consists mostly of Jats and Harijans. About 60 per cent of the population are Jats, 25 per cent Harijans while about 15 per cent of the population belongs to other caste like Brahmins, Rajputs, Vaishyas etc. In Chakwali the Goojars - both Hindus and Muslims - are dominant constituting almost 60 per cent of the population. Scheduled Castes constitute another 20 to 25 per cent while other castes like Brahmins, Rajputs and Vaishyas etc. make up the rest. In both these villages Jats and Goojars are the main cultivators

and they generally belong to the middle category of farmers (5 - 15 acres). The Harijans are mainly agricultural labourers or small and marginal farmers while the upper castes tend to be among the large farmers, though a number of Jats and Goojars are also represented in this category. Singahi Khurd on the other hand is a predominantly Sikh village who constitute about 80 per cent of the population. Harijans (Hindus) constitute about 15 per cent and the rest belong to other castes. Sikhs are the main landowners belonging most to the large and medium categories while Harijans are either agricultural labourers or marginal farmers. Interestingly we came to know of at least five persons owning more than 200 acres of land and one owning more than 150 acres.

It would perhaps be interesting to take a look at the distribution of landholdings in these villages especially to find out which category of landowners predominate so that we can later on compare it with the data on land sale and the landholding class to which the buyers and sellers belong. Relevant data for the three villages are given in Table 5.2 below.

Table 5.2 : Percentage Distribution of Cultivator Households by Landholding Classes in Sample Villages

Landholding Classes (Acres)	Percent of Cultivator Households		
	Chandenakoli	Chakwali	Singahi Khurd
0 - 1	26.45	10.02	17.00
1 - 2	12.59	20.04	20.00
2 - 5	20.40	49.91	40.00
5 - 10	23.68	10.02	10.00
10 - 20	16.37	10.02	8.00
Over 20	0.50	-	5.00
All Classes	100.00	100.00	100.00
Per cent of all households owning no land	46.71	19.15	4.00

The table shows interesting variations in the three villages in regard to the distribution of landholdings. In Chandanakoli over 26 per cent of the cultivator households own less than 1 acre of land and another 12.5 per cent fall in the 1-2 acre category. The 2-5 acre category consists of slightly over 20 per cent of cultivating households. In this way about 60 per cent of the cultivators fall in the marginal and small category. In Chakwali only 10 per cent of the households own less than 1 acre, 20 per cent 1-2 acres and about 50 per cent fall in the 2-5 acre category. Thus small and marginal farmers constitute 80 per cent of the cultivating households in Chakwali. In Singahi Khurd the ~~max households~~ ~~own~~ less than one acre category consists of 17 per cent of cultivators while 20 per cent fall in the 1-2 acre class and another 40 per cent in the 2-5 acres class. Small and marginal farmers in this fashion constitute 77 per cent of all cultivating households in Singahi Khurd. The distribution of small and marginal holdings thus is somewhat similar in Chakwali and Singahi Khurd and quite distinct in Chandanakoli. Compared to the former villages there is a larger porportion of marginal farmers and a smaller proportion of small farmers in Chandanakoli. Similarly the proportion of households owning no land is also much higher in Chandanakoli (about 47 per cent) in comparison to Chakwali (19 per cent) and Singahi Khurd (4 per cent).

Similar differences prevail in the three villages in regard to the distribution of cultivating households in the medium categories of land ownership (5-10 acre and 10-20 acre classes). Their proportion in Chandanakoli is 40 per cent while it is 20 per cent and 18 per cent respectively in Chakwali and Singahi Khurd. Finally only one-half of one per cent of the households fall in the large category in Chandanakoli, none in Chakwali and 5 per cent in Singahi Khurd. Clearly, it is only in Singahi Khurd that one finds a substantial proportion of large holdings. As we have already pointed out many holdings exceed 200 acres in Singahi Khurd.

II. Land Sale : Buyers and Sellers

After having reviewed briefly the general characteristics of the villages selected for study we take up next the data on land sales, especially with a view to identifying the magnitude of land sales and the characteristics of the buyers and sellers of land. We begin with the number and area of land sales and the characteristics of the sellers of land. The data for the three villages are presented in Tables 5.3 to 5.5. These include all land sale cases between 1971 and 1981 which we could identify in these villages by contracting either the sellers or buyers of land.

Table 5.3 : Economic Characteristics of Sellers
of Land : Chandenakoli

Land Owning Class (Acres)	No. of Seller Households	Total Land Sold (Acres)	Average Land Sold Per House- hold (Acres)	Average Land Owned Per House- hold (acres)
Less than 1.00	4 (10.00)	0.54 (0.87)	0.14	0.38
1.00 - 1.99	2 (5.00)	1.17 (1.88)	0.59	1.34
2.00 - 4.99	5 (12.50)	14.41 (23.14)	2.88	4.04
5.00 - 7.49	11 (27.50)	24.78 (39.80)	2.25	6.19
7.50 - 9.99	2 (5.00)	0.50 (0.80)	0.25	7.92
10.00 & over	16 (40.00)	20.86 (33.50)	1.30	14.27
All Classes	40 (100.00)	62.26 (100.00)	1.56	8.42

Figures in parentheses represent percentages

Table 5.4 : Economic Characteristics of Sellers
of Land : Chakwali

Land Owning Class (Acres)	No. of Seller Households	Total Land Sold (Acres)	Average Land Sold Per House- hold (Acres)	Average Land Owned Per House- hold (Acres)
Less than 1.00	2 (14.29)	3.92 (12.17)	1.96	-
1.00 - 1.99	-	-	-	-
2.00 - 4.99	-	-	-	-
5.00 - 7.49	2 (14.29)	7.50 (23.28)	3.75	5.00
7.50 - 9.99	3 (21.43)	2.79 (8.66)	0.93	7.80
10.00 & over	7 (50.00)	18.00 (55.88)	2.57	13.09
All Classes	14 (100.00)	32.21 (100.00)	2.30	8.93

Figures in parentheses represents percentages

Table 5.5 : Economic Characteristics of Sellers
of Land : Singahi Khurd

Land Owning Class (Acres)	No. of Seller Households	Total Land Sold (Acres)	Average Land Sold Per House- hold (Acres)	Average Land Owned Per House- hold (Acres)
Less than 1.00	9 (25.71)	7.26 (8.34)	0.81	-
1.00 - 1.99	1 (2.86)	0.94 (1.08)	0.94	1.00
2.00 - 4.99	7 (20.00)	8.32 (9.56)	1.19	3.36
5.00 - 7.49	6 (17.14)	7.08 (8.13)	1.18	5.33
7.50 - 9.99	1 (2.86)	2.50 (2.87)	2.50	9.00
10.00 & over	11 (31.43)	60.95 (70.02)	5.54	16.59
All Classes	35 (100.00)	87.05 (100.00)	2.49	7.09

Figures in parentheses represents percentages

It will be seen from the tables that the number of transactions identified from the sellers of land were 40 in Chandanakoli, 14 in Chakwali and 35 in Singahi Khurd. The area involved in these transactions came to 62.21 acres in Chandanakoli, 32.21 acres in Chakwali and 87.05 acres in Singahi Khurd. Thus the number of land sale transactions was highest in Chandanakoli followed by Singahi Khurd and Chakwali while the area of sale was maximum in Singahi Khurd followed by Chandanakoli and Chakwali.

Further the tables show that in Chandanakoli and Chakwali the middle (5-10 acres) and upper (over 10 acres) categories of cultivators are the main sellers of land, while in Singahi Khurd the large cultivators are the major sellers of land. In Chandanakoli the share of small and marginal cultivators (upto 5 acres) in total land sold was about 26 per cent while their share in total landholdings in the village was about 60 per cent (see Table 5.2). In Chakwali this category of cultivators accounted for about 12 per cent of the area sold though it held about 80 per cent of all land in the village; and in Singahi Khurd the corresponding figures came to about 19 per cent of the land sold and 77 per cent of the land owned. The middle category of cultivators accounted for about 41 per cent of land sold in Chandanakoli, about 32 per cent in Chakwali and 11 per cent in Singahi Khurd while its share in landholdings in these three villages was about 24

per cent, 10 per cent and 10 per cent respectively. Finally the share of the upper category of cultivators in land sales was about 36 per cent in Chandanakoli, 56 per cent in Chakwali and 70 per cent in Singahi Khurd. This may be compared with their share of about 17 per cent, 10 per cent and 10 per cent respectively in the total landholdings in these villages.

Data on average land sold per household also follows the same general pattern. In Chandanakoli ~~and~~ the area of average sale is highest among households belonging to the 2-5 acre~~s~~ and 5-7.5 acre~~s~~ landholding classes. After these comes the households in the over 10 acre class while the average area of sales is lowest in the less than 1 acre class followed by the 7.5-10 acre and 1-2 acre classes. In Chakwali the average area of land sold is highest among households in the 5-7.5 acre and over 10 acre classes and lowest among the 7.5-10 acre class. However the average area sold in each householding category is higher than in Chandanakoli. One reason for this probably is that no land has been sold by households in the 1-2 acre and 2-5 acre classes in Chakwali. The pattern in Singahi Khurd is quite distinct from that of the other two villages. Here the average area of land sold by households is directly related to the landholding size class. It is lowest in the less than one acre class and highest in the over 10 acre class.

Having seen the characteristics of the sellers of land we move next to an examination of the buyers of land. The data for these villages are presented in Tables 5.6 to 5.8. At the outset we would like to point out that the number and area of land sale and purchase transactions do not match in the three villages. Thus in Chandēnakoli we have 40 cases of land sale involving a total area of 62.26 acres and 36 cases of purchase involving a total area of 31.77 acres. In Chakwali there are 14 sale cases covering 32.21 acres and 17 purchase cases covering 33.98 acres. In Singahi Khurd the sale cases number 35 involving an area of 87.05 acres while the number of purchase cases is 55 with a total area of 153.72 acres. The main reason for this discrepancy, as pointed out earlier as well, is that we were unable to locate all persons who had either sold or bought land, because many of them had either left the villages or were deceased.

Tables 5.6 to 5.8 show that in Chandēnakoli land has been bought mostly by the large cultivators whose purchases constitute about 63 per cent of the total area. The middle and the small landholding classes have bought almost equal land - 20 per cent and 18 per cent of the total area respectively. A somewhat similar pattern can be found in Singahi Khurd with the larger cultivators accounting for about 87 per cent of the land bought and the middle and small categories for about 7 and 5 per cent respectively. In Chakwali, on the

Table 5.6 : Economic Characteristics of Buyers
of Land : Chandanakoli

Land Owning Class (Acres)	No. of Buyer Households	Total Land Purchased (Acres)	Average Land Pur- chased Per Household (Acres)	Average Land Owned Per House- hold (Acres)
Less than 1.00	7 (18.42)	2.74 (8.62)	0.39	0.08
1.00 - 1.99	4 (10.53)	2.34 (7.37)	0.59	1.38
2.00 - 4.99	3 (7.89)	0.62 (1.95)	0.21	2.61
5.00 - 7.49	7 (18.42)	6.21 (19.55)	0.89	6.18
7.50 - 9.99	-	-	-	-
10.00 & over	17 (44.74)	19.86 (62.51)	1.17	15.63
All Classes	38 (100.00)	31.77 (100.00)	0.84	8.50

Figures in parentheses represent percentages

Table 5.7 : Economic Characteristics of Buyers of Land : Chakwali

Land Owning Class (Acres)	No. of Buyer Households	Total Land Purchased (Acres)	Average Land Purchased Per Household (Acres)	Average Land Owned Per Household (Acres)
Less than 1.00	-	-	-	-
1.00 - 1.99	-	-	-	-
2.00 - 4.99	6 (35.29)	13.24 (36.96)	2.21	3.22
5.00 - 7.49	4 (23.53)	8.08 (23.78)	2.02	5.73
7.50 - 9.99	2 (11.76)	2.17 (6.39)	1.09	8.50
10.00 & over	5 (29.41)	10.49 (30.87)	2.10	11.67
All Classes	17 (100.00)	33.98 (100.00)	2.00	6.92

Figures in parentheses represent percentages

Table 5.8 : Economic Characteristics of Buyers
of Land : Singahi Khurd

Land Owning Class (Acres)	No. of Buyer Households	Total Land Purchased (Acres)	Average Land Pur- chased Per Household (Acres)	Average Land Owned Per House- hold (Acres)
Less than 1.00	25 (45.45)	6.88 (4.48)	0.28	-
1.00 - 1.99	-	-	-	-
2.00 - 4.99	3 (5.45)	4.53 (2.95)	1.51	2.50
5.00 - 7.49	-	-	-	-
7.50 - 9.99	1 (1.82)	8.25 (5.37)	8.25	8.25
10.00 & over	26 (47.27)	134.06 (87.21)	5.16	26.41
All Classes	55 (100.00)	153.72 (100.00)	2.79	12.77

Figures in parentheses represent percentages

other hand, all the three categories of landholders have purchased almost equal area though the share of the small category is somewhat larger (39 per cent) than that of the other two (30 per cent for the medium category and about 31 per cent for the large). It may be pertinent to point out that while in Chakwali all the buyers of land falling in the category of small landholders (less than 5 acres) belong to the 2-5 acre class, in Chandanakoli this class accounts for only a small part of the land bought by the small holders. More land has been bought by the less than 1 acre and 1-2 acre classes (9 per cent and 7 per cent respectively) than the 2-5 acre class (2 per cent). In Singahi Khurd small landholders have purchased very little land; but within this category maximum purchases have been made by the less than 1 acre landholding class (4 per cent) followed by the 2-5 acre class (3 per cent). As for the buyers of land in the medium landholding category (5-10 acres) we find that in Chandanakoli and Chakwali most of them fall in the 5-7.5 acre class while in Singahi Khurd they all belong to the 7.50-10 acre group.

When we juxtapose the data on land sales and purchases in the three villages we find certain interesting results. These are summarised in Table 5.9 below. It appears from this table that a considerable part of the land transactions have taken place among the large landowners (over 10 acres) in all the three villages but especially so in Singahi Khurd where 70

per cent of the area has been sold and 87 per cent bought by this group. Further in Chakwali a similar situation appears in respect of the middle category of cultivators especially the 5-7.5 acre class. At the same time the 2-5 acre category in Chakwali is also a major purchaser of land mainly from the smallest and the largest category of cultivators. In Chandanakoli, on the other hand, while some land has been exchanged among the cultivators in the 5-7.5 acre class, it is noteworthy that land appears to have been transferred mainly from the 2-5 acre class and the 5-7.5 acre class primarily to the large cultivators and to some extent to the less than 2 acre category. Finally in Singahi Khurd we notice land transfers taking place overwhelmingly among the category of large cultivators, though some land has also been transferred from the small and medium groups to the large cultivators.

Table 5.9 : Per Cent of Land Sold and Bought in
Selected Villages by Landholding Size
Classes

Landholding Size Class (Acres)	Chandanakoli		Chakwali		Singahi Khurd	
	% Sold	% Bought	% Sold	% Bought	% Sold	% Bought
Less than 1	0.87	8.62	12.17	-	8.34	4.48
1.00 - 1.99	1.88	7.37	-	-	1.08	-
2.00 - 4.99	23.14	1.95	-	38.96	9.56	4.53
5.00 - 7.49	39.80	19.55	23.28	23.78	8.13	-
7.50 - 10.00	0.80	-	2.06	6.39	2.87	5.37
10.00 & over	33.50	62.51	55.88	30.87	70.02	87.21
All Classes	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

What emerges from this analysis is that the pattern of land transfers are quite distinct in Saharanpur and Kheri districts. In Saharanpur generally land transfers have taken place mainly among the medium and large category of cultivators with some land being acquired by the smaller cultivators as well. In one village (Chakwali) land seems to have been transferred from the top and bottom levels of the landownership hierarchy to the middle levels, while in the other (Chandenakoli) it appears that transfers have taken place from the middle levels to the upper and lower levels. In Singahi Khurd, on the contrary, most of the transfers have taken place among the large farmers with some land also being transferred from the lower levels of the landholding hierarchy. However, the fact that the large landowners are the major buyers of the land in at least two of the three villages does lend support to the conclusion that land transfers have tended to consolidate the position of this section of the rural society. In this sense the overall results of land transfers are no different from those of land reforms ^{of} other programmes of rural development, especially the "green revolution".

III. Impact of Land Transfers

Having said this we would, however, like to point out that the impact of land transfers on the rural social structure is, at best, marginal in the villages we have studied, except perhaps in one area. In particular we would like to emphasise that our data do not suggest much of an impact of land transfers

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on the overall distribution of land ownership. The main reason for this is that in the villages we have studied (except to some extent Singahi Khurd) the area of land transferred during the eleven year period (1971-1981) is very small in relation to the total landholdings. This figure comes to 2.31 per cent in Chandanakoli, 1.68 per cent in Chakwali and 12.57 in Singahi Khurd. Thus it is only in Singahi Khurd that one finds more than ten per cent of the land being involved in transfers. Further, since most of the land has been transferred among the large farmers it would be mistaken to infer that the overall distribution of land-ownership even in Singahi Khurd has become much more unequal in the process. To the extent land has been transferred from the small and medium cultivators to the large ones a greater degree of inequality would inevitably have resulted though its magnitude does not appear to be large.

In general, therefore, it could be claimed that land transfers have not assumed much of an importance in the rural economy and society of Uttar Pradesh. This only goes to show that there is tremendous tenacity to hold on to land on the part of the cultivators, and even the smallest among them will part with their land only as a last resort. This tenacity is not difficult to explain. Apart from the fact that the ownership of land - however little it may be - gives status and

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prestige in the rural society, ~~the~~ land does provide some security even to the smallest landowner, especially when other avenues of earning a livelihood are not easily available in the rural areas. It is hardly surprising therefore that even with the growing commercialisation of agriculture and the desire of some people - especially the medium and large cultivators - to own more land, a very small percentage of the total area is involved in land sales.

Singahi Khurd appears to be an exception to this generalisation mainly on account of the particular circumstances obtaining there. As we have pointed out earlier, it is situated in a newly settled area where land was given to people (mainly Sikh farmers) unsettled from Pakistan. The average size of landholdings here is rather high and many people have also taken illegal and forcible possession of forest lands and of lands belonging to the Tharu tribals. It has already been noted that most of the land transactions have taken place among the large farmers most of whom are Sikhs. These people are generally very hardworking and prosperous and since land is available they tend to invest in it when their sons grow up and buy land in their names. Singahi Khurd, thus, has all the features of a newly settled frontier area inhabited by hardworking people where land is not too great a constraint and where agriculture is prosperous. This situation is quite different from that in the rest of the state.

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Given the general tenacity to hold on to land, it would therefore be interesting to ask under what circumstances people sell land. This we attempted to do by investigating the reasons for sale. The results are presented in Table 5.10. It may be pointed out here that while the total number of land sales in our study was 40 in Chandanakoli, 14 in Chakwali and 35 in Singahi Khurd, the number of given here is 39, 14 and 25 respectively in these villages. The reason for this difference is that some people sold land more than once giving the same reason for the sale. In this table such sales have not been counted separately. The area of the sales, however, remains the same.

Table 5.10 : Number and Area of Land Sales Giving Reasons for Sale

Reasons for sale	(Area in acres)					
	Chandanakoli		Chakwali		Singahi Khurd	
	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area
Repay debt	9 (23.08)	13.46 (21.62)	3 (21.43)	8.21 (25.49)	2 (8.00)	2.59 (2.96)
Land improvement	2 (5.13)	7.37 (11.84)	2 (14.29)	9.00 (27.94)	1 (4.00)	0.53 (0.61)
House construction/ repair	3 (7.69)	8.20 (13.17)	-	-	3 (12.00)	1.07 (1.23)
Land too far to cultivate	13 (33.33)	16.27 (26.13)	1 (7.14)	3.67 (11.39)	5 (20.00)	8.82 (10.13)
Escape ceiling	2 (5.13)	1.50 (2.41)	-	-	3 (12.00)	47.70 (54.80)
Other (consumption needs)	10 (25.64)	15.46 (24.83)	8 (57.14)	11.33 (35.18)	11 (44.00)	26.34 (30.26)
Total	39 (100)	62.26 (100)	14 (100)	32.21 (100)	25 (100)	87.05 (100)

Figures in parentheses represent percentages

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It will be seen from the table that among the most frequently cited reasons for sale given by the sellers in Chandanakoli are land being too far to cultivate, meeting consumption needs, repayment of debt, house construction/repair, land improvement (viz., buying tractors, tubewell/pumpsets, thresher etc.) and desire to escape ceiling legislation, in that order. The area involved in these sales also follows the same order. The first three reasons seem to be the most important as they constitute over 82 per cent of land sales and 72 per cent of the total area sold.

In Chakwali the most frequently cited reasons for sale are meeting consumption needs, repayment of debt, land improvement and land being too far to cultivate. The first reason is the most important as it covers 57 per cent of the transfers and 35 per cent of the area sold. The first three together cover about 93 per cent of the transfers and about 89 per cent of the area sold.

In Singahi Khurd the situation is quite different. The most frequently cited reason for sale of land is the need to meet consumption expenditure. The percentage of responses in this category comes to 44 involving about 30 per cent of the total area. However the share of total area sold by people who gave the desire to escape ceiling legislation as the reason

for sale of land (12 per cent of the responses) is much higher - about 55 per cent. The third reason for sale which has some importance in this village is land being too far to cultivate. Twenty per cent of the sales and 10 per cent of the area fall in this category. The data from Singahi Khurd once again confirms the impression that it is the larger farmers who are the main sellers and buyers of land.

Looking at the reasons for sale in general we find that the need to meet consumption expenditure (e.g. buying food, medicines, meeting health care expenses, marriages and other celebrations, childrens education etc.) ranks high as a reason for the sale of land in all villages. Obviously this would be a constraint felt most by the small cultivators. The need to sell land for repayment of debt has a high incidence in Chandanakoli and Chakwali showing the somewhat precarious economic condition of the sellers in this category. Land improvement followed by need to sell land too far to cultivate are important factors in both these villages which implies a desire on the part of cultivators, especially the middle and larger ones, to make capital investments on their land in order to increase returns and to have compact areas for cultivation which would reduce the expenditure and effort on cultivation and supervision. Obviously this may be the result of the growing commercialisation of agriculture which promises higher returns ^{if} ~~as~~ greater investments are made in land improvement and unnecessary costs reduced. It is interesting to note that the order of priority between these two reasons especially in terms of percentage of total

area sold is reversed in the two villages. Finally while all the reasons for sale figure in the Singahi Khurd responses, two of them viz., desire to escape ceilings law and meeting consumption expenditure are the most important. While the first reason influences land sales by the large landowners, the second one is most likely to be important in the case of the smaller ones. Further since the first reason covers more land area than the second it may be inferred that the larger landowners are the dominant section in Singahi Khurd in terms of land sales and indirectly in the rural socio-economic structure particularly in view of the fact noted earlier that most of the land transfers have taken place among this section.

We finally take up the caste characteristics of the sellers and buyers of land (Table 5.11 to 5.13). It is apparent that in both Chandanakoli and Chakwali an overwhelming majority of the sellers and buyers of land belong to the upper castes. Further the upper caste buyers and sellers both belong mainly to the middle and higher levels of the landholding categories. The only difference that we notice is that in Chandanakoli most of the buyers come from the 10 acres and over class while in Chakwali the 5-10 acre class has more upper caste buyers. Secondly there are relatively fewer sellers and buyers from amongst the backward cultivating castes (mainly Jats in Chakwali and Goojars in Chandanakoli) in these two villages. In Chandanakoli we found only one seller and buyer

Table 5.11 : Distribution of Sellers and Buyers
by Caste and Landholding Size Class :
Chandenakoli

Land Holding Class (Acres)	Sellers (No.)			Buyers (No.)		
	Upper Caste	Backward Caste	SC/ST	Upper Caste	Backward Caste	SC/ST
Less than 1.00	1	1	2	4	-	3
1.00 - 2.00	1	-	1	2	-	2
2.00 - 5.00	5	-	-	2	1	-
5.00 - 7.50	11	-	-	6	-	1
7.50 - 10.00	2	-	-	-	-	-
10.00 & above	15	-	1	16	-	1
All Classes	35	1	4	30	1	7

Table 5.12 : Distribution of Sellers and Buyers
By Caste and Landholding Size Class :
Chakwali

Land Holding Class (Acres)	Sellers (No.)			Buyers (No.)		
	Upper Caste	Backward Caste	SC/ST	Upper Caste	Backward Caste	SC/ST
Less than 1.00	2	-	-	-	-	-
1.00 - 2.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
2.00 - 5.00	-	-	-	4	1	1
5.00 - 7.50	2	-	-	1	3	-
7.50 - 49.99	1	2	-	2	-	-
10.00 & above	6	1	-	4	1	-
All Classes	11	3	-	11	5	1

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Table 5.13 : Distribution of Sellers and Buyers
by Caste and Landholding Size Class :
Singahi Khurd

Land Holding Class (Acres)	Sellers (No.)				Buyers (No.)			
	Sikhs	Upper Caste Hindus	Back- ward Caste	SC/ST	Sikhs	Upper Caste Hindus	Back- ward Caste	SC/ST
Less than 1.00	3	2	4	-	6	18	1	-
1.00 - 2.00	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
2.00 - 5.00	-	1	5	1	-	3	-	-
5.00 - 7.50	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-
7.50 - 49.99	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
10.00 & above	9	1	1	-	20	6	-	-
All Classes	12	5	16	2	26	28	1	-

from this category and both belong to the small and marginal category of land holders. In Chakwali there were 3 sellers and 5 buyers from this category. The backward caste sellers belonged to the upper middle (7.5 - 10 acres) and large (over 10 acres) category of landowners while the buyers were mainly from the small, middle and large categories. Finally there were more Scheduled Caste sellers and buyers in Chandanakoli than in Chakwali. In fact there was no sellerⁿ belonging to the Scheduled Castes in Chakwali and only one buyer from this category - belonging to the 2-5 acre land owning category. In Chandanakoli on the other handⁿ out of the 4 Scheduled Caste sellers one was a large farmer and 3 were marginal ones. Similarly out of the 7 buyers of land 1 was a large farmer, 5 marginal farmers and one belonged to the medium category. Clearly then land transactions in these two villages of Saharanpur district took place mainly among the upper castes belonging to the middle and large landholding classes. A few scheduled caste households have also engaged in transfers but mainly as buyers. The backward cultivating castes have generally not been major sellers and buyers of land except to some extent in Chakwali.

In Singahi Khurd the main buyers and sellers of land were Sikhs and Upper Caste Hindus. Backward cultivating castes were mainly sellers. Sikhs formed 34 per cent of the sellers and 47 per cent of the buyers, upper caste Hindus

formed 14 per cent of sellers and 51 per cent of the buyers while the backward castes constituted about 46 per cent of the sellers and less than 2 per cent of the buyers. Two Scheduled Caste households also sold land while none figured among the buyers. It is interesting to note that the Sikh households who sold and bought land belonged mainly to the highest landholding class with a few from the lowest class (less than 1 acre). In the case of the upper caste Hindus the sellers came from almost all landholding classes while the buyers belonged mainly to the smallest class with a few from the highest one. It is thus quite clear that most of the land transfers in Singahi Khurd have taken place among the large Sikh cultivators who are dominant in this area.

In the end we would like to comment upon ^{one} ~~the~~ aspect of land transfers in Singahi Khurd as some of the cases of sales we came across appear to be in violation of the law. One of the provisions of the Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act, 1950 is that sale of land by bhumidhars with transferable rights is subject to the condition^s that only so much land can be transferred to a person which along with the land already held by him or his family would not exceed 12.5 acres. In Singahi Khurd we found at least 5 cases where the buyers after buying land came into possession of more than 12.5 acres. In five other cases while the buyer's own holdings did not exceed 12.5 acres, the total of his and his other family members holding were decidedly above this limit. It was not clear to us how these transfers took place although they appear to be violative of the law.

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CHAPTER VI

Conclusion

In the previous chapters we have analysed the pattern of land transfers in selected districts of Uttar Pradesh both as the aggregate level on the basis of records available at the sub-registrars' offices for the period 1971-1981 and at the micro (village) level on the basis of primary household survey. Our attempt, as mentioned at the outset, was to determine and analyse the magnitude of land transfers, the social and economic characteristics of the sellers and buyers of land, the reasons for sale of land and the impact of land sales on the rural economy and society. It may be recalled that we began this report with a general review of the major land reforms legislation in Uttar Pradesh in order to see what kind of socio-economic structure has emerged in the State in the post-independence period so that our study may be situated in the appropriate context. Our purpose in this chapter is to recapitulate some of our major findings and relate them to the issues which were raised at the outset.

The first point that we wish to emphasise is that, except in one area studied by us, the area of land involved in land transfer is not too large though a large number of sales have taken place. In fact we found that in the villages of Saharanpur district the area sold during the eleven year period

(1971-1981) varied between 1.7 to 2.3 per cent of the total landholding in the villages. By any account, therefore, this level of land transfer can only be considered modest in magnitude. It was only in Singahi Khurd, which is situated in the Terai belt (Nighasan Tehsil) of Lakhimpur Kheri district, that we found total land sales constituting 12.6 per cent of the landholdings. Though much larger than the other villages, the area of land sold here too cannot be considered too large as it refers to all land sold during an eleven year period (1971-1981) so that the area sold per year is a little over one per cent of all land in the village. The substantially higher volume of sales here is mainly on account of a set of unique circumstances which do not prevail in the rest of the state. Most of the cultivators in this area consist of refugees or their descendants from Pakistan who were allotted land after clearing the forests. Average size of landholdings are much larger than in the rest of the state and people have also increased their holdings by illegal and forcible occupation of forest and tribal lands. Thus the availability of land is not as big a constraint as elsewhere.

Secondly we found that the average area of each sale is also not very large. It came to 0.91 acres in Azamgarh, 1.71 acres in Saharanpur and 3.91 acres in Lakhimpur Kheri. Clearly then, very small plots of land are put up for sale in Azamgarh. The average area per sale is somewhat larger in Saharanpur

though not too large while it is the highest in Kheri. These findings also show that the situation in Kheri is quite distinct from the other areas in the State mainly on account of the prevalence of larger land holdings. Further, the average area per land sale appears to be directly related to the pressure of population on land which is highest in Azamgarh and lowest in Kheri.

These findings in our view point towards the existence of a strong tenacity on the part of all landowners to hold on to their land, however small their holdings and irrespective of the other changes taking place in their socio-economic environment. This is particularly so in areas where the pressure on land is high. It may be recalled that at the outset we identified two major tendencies of post-independence agrarian change in India viz., strengthening and consolidation of the class of owner-cultivators, especially the middle and large cultivators, and the growing commercialisation of agriculture. This we felt could lead to an increasing volume of land transfers especially from the smaller cultivators to the middle and larger ones primarily because the latter have the necessary capital and being in an advantageous position are capable of, and keen to, invest in land and increase their returns from cultivation. However, our findings show that while the middle and large cultivators may be keen to buy land, the smaller ones are not willing to sell their holdings. This

tenacity to hold on to land can be explained mainly in terms of the security which even a small plot of land provides in the rural areas particularly in times of distress like drought etc. when other avenues of livelihood may completely dry up. Even in normal times their situation is quite precarious.

Our third finding, which is related to this observation, therefore was that most of the land was being transferred among either the large farmers (Singahi Khurd) or among the medium and large cultivators (e.g. Chandenakoli and Chakwali). This fact too is quite understandable as only the large and medium cultivators have the necessary wherewithal to invest in land and derive maximum advantage from their investments.

Further most of the land is being bought and sold by the upper castes. This conforms to the finding that most of the land transactions take place among the medium and large cultivators as there is a good match between the caste and the landowning hierarchies. In fact we found that very few backward cultivating caste or scheduled caste households are sellers of land (except in Singahi Khurd) though some do tend to buy it. In Singahi Khurd the main sellers and buyers of land are the Sikhs and upper caste Hindus. The Sikhs generally are large farmers and the upper caste Hindus small and medium farmers. The backward cultivating castes and scheduled castes mainly figure as sellers of land and belong to the small and medium category of farmers.

Fourthly, when we analysed the reasons for sale of land we came to the conclusion that the need to meet consumption expenditure (food, medicines, health care, marriage expenses, childrens education etc.) was generally important in all villages. The importance of other reasons varied among the villages. In the villages of Saharanpur district repayment of debt, need to make investments in land (buying tractors, tubewells, pumpsets, threshers etc.) and getting rid of land which was too far to cultivate figured prominently. In Singahi Khurd, on the other hand, the need to escape ceilings legislation and land being too far to cultivate turned out to be the other major reasons for sale of land. The first of these is a clear pointer to the existence of large landholdings in that area. In fact we came across at least 5 cases where people owned more than 200 acres of land and one where over 150 acres was owned.

Finally, coming to the impact of land sales on the rural economy and society our study has shown that it is at best marginal. The main reasons for this conclusion are that sales constitute only a very small part of the total land in a village and the average area of a sale is also modest. In this situation one cannot expect transfers of land from one category of cultivator to another (e.g. from the marginal and small to the middle and large) on a scale sufficiently large to have an impact on the overall distribution of landownership and therefore on the

rural socio-economic structure. The tenacity to hold on to land which we talked about also inhibits such a process from operating. Thus while the logic of the economic changes operating in the environment of rural society viz., growing commercialisation and therefore increasing attractiveness of investment in land, may point to the possibility of an increase in land sales and transfers from the small and marginal to the larger cultivators, this has in fact not happened. One possible explanation for this could be that the rural social structure based on landownership and caste hierarchies has come to acquire a certain stability over time which cannot easily be disturbed by economic forces which have yet to take full roots and are still in a nascent stage.

The one exception to this generalisation is Singahi Khurd where both the magnitude of land transfer and the average area of land sales are much higher than elsewhere. The reason for this, as we have repeatedly emphasised, is that it is a newly-settled area where average holdings are of a larger size. The rural social structure too is not as deeply entrenched mainly because it is inhabited by people who came from outside about 25-30 years back. Yet, even in Singahi Khurd land transfers have not had much of an impact on the rural social structure and the overall distribution of land ownership because most of the transfers have taken place among the large farmers - mainly Sikhs.

Yet another reason for the low magnitude of land transfer could possibly be the legal restrictions on buyers of land. For instance a person cannot increase his holdings beyond 12.5 acres by buying land and persons belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes cannot sell their land to any one other than a scheduled caste or tribe person. We are, however, not too sure how effective these restrictions are in actual practice. We did come across cases in Singahi Khurd where five persons had increased their holdings beyond 12.5 acres as a result of land purchases. In another five cases land held by their family members along with the land held by them in their own name plus their purchases exceeded this limit. In the other two villages we did not find any such violations of the law. The restriction on sale of land by scheduled castes has generally not been violated according to our investigations. Our data for Singahi Khurd does show two cases of sale of land by scheduled caste households while there are no buyers from this group. However this does not necessarily imply that their land was sold to other than scheduled castes because we were not able to locate the buyers of these plots of land.

To conclude this study, therefore, we would like to emphasise that our findings do not suggest that land transfers have acquired much of an importance in Uttar Pradesh at the present moment. In particular the growing commercialisation of agriculture and the emergence of a class of owner cultivators belonging to the medium and large category of land-owners has not, as yet, created a market in land.

ANNEXURE-I

Number and Area of Saleddeeds of Sampled Villages
(Tahsil Lalganj District AZAMGARH)

(Area in Acres)

Villages	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	Total
0	0	21	32	43	54	65	76	87	98	109	110	121	132
Khanjara No	1	3	7	7	1	2	7	1	2	4	1	2	31
Area	0.862	0.862	1.512	13.543	0.811	1.456	1.901	0.460	2.635	5.063	1.000	3.050	32.348
Khursu No	1	2	—	—	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	13
Area	0.690	0.690	2.186	—	0.306	0.150	4.502	0.333	0.402	0.540	0.763	1.233	11.105
Gora No	2	1	8	8	1	2	2	2	2	1	3	3	27
Area	2.106	2.106	2.930	10.008	1.698	5.179	2.026	1.936	2.555	1.272	1.731	3.306	34.797
Jivli No	1	11	17	17	3	2	2	3	4	4	5	3	55
Area	4.612	4.612	20.146	13.695	2.709	1.084	0.413	1.511	2.368	1.349	1.278	1.889	51.054
Diha No	2	3	5	5	1	—	1	2	1	1	1	1	18
Area	1.724	1.724	2.592	4.221	0.200	—	0.550	0.800	0.849	0.107	0.840	0.194	12.077
Bargahan No	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	3	3	3	20
Area	0.756	0.756	8.109	2.171	0.583	1.516	1.486	0.015	2.360	1.476	5.255	3.813	27.540
Bachwal No	2	10	3	3	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	27
Area	1.651	1.651	10.437	2.775	5.981	3.106	1.516	1.819	0.224	1.671	0.240	0.865	30.285
Bardah No	3	3	28	28	5	3	2	4	6	5	4	6	69
Area	1.647	1.647	0.098	27.019	6.306	0.650	4.317	1.325	2.838	3.155	1.688	1.527	90.576
Renda No	1	3	5	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	—	1	16
Area	0.781	0.781	1.087	4.621	0.280	0.107	0.440	0.131	0.200	0.825	—	2.930	11.402
Saral-Mahan No	2	4	3	3	6	2	2	2	4	4	4	2	35
Area	1.370	1.370	3.194	3.799	5.079	2.763	2.066	0.920	6.721	11.006	1.641	3.779	42.338
Total No	16	41	78	78	22	16	22	18	24	26	24	24	311
Area	16.199	16.199	52.291	81.852	23.953	16.017	19.217	9.250	21.202	26.469	14.486	22.586	303.522

Note : Area of Houseplots is not included.

ANNEXURE-III

**Area of Saledeeds of Sampled Villages
(Tahsil Nigahsan Distt. LAKEPUR KHERI)**

Villages	(Area in Acres)											
	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	Total
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Neurangpur	No 1	-	2	2	6	1	2	1	7	4	0	34
	Area	-	3.27	4.17	31.25	5.50	13.35	6.00	38.06	8.35	45.00	154.95
Semri	No 4	5	-	6	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	18
	Area	8.57	53.07	44.83	-	-	-	-	2.42	4.59	-	113.48
Dhakha	No 15	5	10	15	11	5	-	-	1	-	5	67
	Area	42.72	3.92	41.18	14.41	2.40	-	-	3.60	-	15.77	130.72
Jasnagar	No 4	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	2	-	1	10
	Area	27.98	7.50	0.82	-	-	-	1.53	1.09	-	3.00	41.97
Puranpurwa	No 6	-	1	15	8	-	-	-	3	-	-	33.83
	Area	69.81	10.00	118.03	89.30	-	-	-	18.69	-	-	305.83
Singahi	No 8	2	-	19	21	14	-	-	11	12	3	90
	Area	23.00	1.08	69.95	19.02	14.84	-	-	33.77	16.91	0.22	178.79
Balpur	No -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
	Area	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.44	-	3.44
Bam Nagar	No 7	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	4	17
	Area	68.00	-	-	24.50	-	-	-	-	-	21.55	114.05
Chola	No -	-	13	24	-	-	-	-	12	1	-	50
	Area	-	136.25	103.91	-	-	-	-	12.34	12.41	-	264.91
Patihan	No 6	-	-	2	5	-	-	-	-	-	1	27
	Area	26.70	-	17.23	1.50	-	-	13	-	-	1.01	47.72
Total	No 51	13	26	84	57	20	2	15	37	20	22	347
	Area	266.78	65.57	190.70	365.66	179.98	22.74	13.35	109.97	45.70	86.55	1355.86

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Note : Area of Houseplots is not included.

ANNEXURE-IV

Average Area of Saledeeds of Sampled Villages
(Tahsil Lalgan., Distt. Azamgarh)

(in Acres)

Villages	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	Total
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Khanlara	0.862	0.504	1.935	0.811	0.728	0.272	0.460	1.343	1.267	1.000	1.525	1.043
Khursu	0.690	1.093	-	0.306	0.150	2.251	0.333	0.402	0.540	0.382	1.233	0.854
Gora	1.053	2.930	1.251	1.698	2.590	1.013	0.968	1.278	1.272	0.594	1.102	1.289
Jivli	4.612	1.831	0.806	0.903	0.542	0.207	0.504	0.592	0.337	0.256	0.630	0.928
Diha	0.862	0.864	0.844	0.200	-	0.550	0.400	0.849	0.107	0.840	0.194	0.670
Bargahan	0.756	8.109	1.086	0.583	1.516	0.743	0.015	1.180	0.492	1.752	1.271	1.377
Bachwal	0.825	1.044	0.925	2.990	1.553	1.516	1.819	0.224	0.836	0.240	0.432	1.122
Bardah	0.549	0.032	0.965	1.261	0.219	2.158	0.331	0.473	0.631	0.422	0.254	0.733
Renda	0.791	0.362	0.924	0.280	0.107	0.440	0.131	0.200	0.825	-	2.930	0.713
Saralmohan	0.685	0.798	1.260	0.847	1.382	1.033	0.460	1.680	2.752	0.410	1.890	1.210
Total	1.012	1.275	1.049	1.089	1.001	0.874	0.514	0.883	1.018	0.604	0.941	0.976

ANNEXURE-V

Average Area of Saledcedds of Sampled Villages
(Tehsil Nighasan Distt. LAKHIMPUR - KHERI)

(in Acres)

Villages	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Naurangpur	-	-	1.63	2.00	5.21	5.50	0.67	6.00	5.44	2.09	5.62	4.56
Semri	2.14	10.61	-	7.47	-	-	-	-	2.42	2.29	-	6.30
Lhakha	2.85	0.70	4.12	0.45	1.31	0.40	-	-	3.60	-	3.15	1.95
Jas Nagar	6.99	7.50	-	0.82	-	-	-	1.50	0.54	-	3.00	4.20
Puranpurwa	11.63	-	10.00	7.87	11.16	-	-	-	6.23	-	-	9.27
Singahikhurd	2.87	0.54	-	3.68	0.91	1.06	-	-	3.07	1.41	0.07	1.99
Balpur	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.44	-	3.44
Bam Nagar	9.71	-	-	-	4.08	-	-	-	-	-	5.39	6.71
Chola	-	-	10.40	4.33	-	-	-	-	1.03	12.41	-	5.30
Patihan	4.45	-	-	8.61	0.30	-	-	0.10	-	-	1.01	1.77
Total	5.23	5.04	7.33	4.35	3.16	1.14	0.63	0.29	2.97	2.29	3.93	3.91